

ALPHA

No 9 October 1980

MYSTERIES OF MIND & MATTER



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a flight of fantasy?**

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Mount Royal Hotel — Marble Arch

Sunday-Monday, 24-25 May 1981

(The 1981 Spring Bank Holiday)

Leading ufologists from America and Europe are being invited to speak. The First Congress was an overwhelming success and attracted 400 people, while 21 countries were represented. The Congress represents an almost unique opportunity for serious-minded UK researchers to meet colleagues from abroad. The lunatic fringe are definitely not welcome at this event.

The Congress is being arranged in co-ordination with Grand Metropolitan Hotels, who are offering a special package deal including admission, accommodation and rail travel. Send a stamped envelope (9 x 5") for details to: The Hon. Secretary, BUFORA, 6 Cairn Avenue, London W5 5HX.

The British UFO Research Association, founded in 1962, is a company limited by guarantee as BUFORA Ltd. It publishes six lively journals a year, co-ordinates a nationwide team of investigators, operates a lending library for books and tapes, publishes special reports, and holds monthly lectures. It is the only UK organisation to have produced a detailed manual for investigating UFO reports. It has a Scottish Branch based in Edinburgh.

For details and lecture programme card, send a stamped addressed envelope to: The Hon. Secretary, 6 Cairn Avenue, London W5 5HX.

ALPHA

October 1980

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The views, claims and opinions expressed by contributors and advertisers are not necessarily shared or accepted by the editors and publishers of the magazine.

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Our last Issue . . .

THIS, unfortunately, is very likely the last issue of *Alpha* to be published. It goes without saying that it is with great regret and only after much heart searching — and account scrutinising — that we announce this sad news.

The reasons are, in these harsh inflationary times, financial. It has cost far more to get the magazine off the ground than we had hoped. We depend on subscriptions for the bulk of our income and our main problem is that we simply do not have enough subscribers to keep *Alpha* afloat. For some time it has cost us more to produce the magazine than we have received in income. In addition, we still have debts incurred in the initial launch.

We had hoped that our readership would have increased and thus solved our problems. But it has not grown at anything like the rate necessary and we have not got the capital to promote further sales. The only funds behind *Alpha* were those put up by us, the two founding editors. As well as losing that money, we also have debts to pay off. For the record, we have not taken any income for the past fourteen months in order to keep the magazine alive.

There comes a time when a firm decision has to be made, even though it means disappointing our subscribers. We hope you will understand that in our position, with debts rather than assets, we

simply have not got the money to refund the balance of subscriptions.

However, we do have back numbers of some issues of the magazine (Nos 1,2,6,7 & 8) and will happily send these free to existing subscribers if they will send a 10p stamp for each issue required.

We still strongly believe that a magazine like *Alpha* is needed to cut a clear path of honest common sense through the prejudice and bigotry that mars so much of the coverage given to the paranormal — by both believers and detractors who have already made up their minds.

Naturally, we are prepared to look at any substantial proposals for keeping *Alpha* in existence. But without the intervention of someone, or some group, with capital, this must be the last issue of *Alpha*, at least in its present incarnation.

We have enjoyed producing the magazine enormously and believe that even in the space of its nine-issue life it has lifted the veil on a number of mysteries. We thank all those who have contributed and helped to keep the debate at a stimulatingly high level.

David Harvey and Roy Stemman

UFO REPORT

Lionel Beer FRAS, a founding-member of the **British UFO Research Association** in 1962, and a past Chairman is currently a director of **BUFORA Ltd.** He published **SPACELINK** magazine between 1967-71, and ran the first **UFO Study Course** in London at **Morley College** in 1979.

UFO Flat

NO — this is not a typographical error!

The fact is that like other paranormal phenomena, UFO activity tends to be cyclical. During 1980, we have been going through a remarkably flat period for sightings, both at home and abroad. Now there have been times when UFO flaps have occurred during or immediately following periods of high sun-spot activity. So I telephoned Heather Couper, a talented and vivacious young astronomer, who works as 'planetarium lecturer' at the Royal Greenwich Observatory, Greenwich, to ascertain the current position. Incidentally, Heather disappeared through a Black Hole at the centre of the galaxy with Patrick Moore on the *Sky At Night* BBC TV programme on 13th May. She has now returned and was able to confirm that there had been high sun-spot activity for the past 6-9 months. She thought that it was reaching a peak in June 1980. So what happened to the UFO flap? Is that another theory down the drain, or is it just about to start?

1980 was not entirely devoid of sightings. In case anyone thinks that silver cigar-shaped objects were a product of George Adamski's telescope, I can assure them that these archetypes have been reported regularly over the years. The case of Mr and Mrs Hughes of Llandaff, a pleasant suburb of Cardiff noted for its cathedral, is a recent example.

Llandaff cigar

I was alerted by a telephone call from Mr Hughes and this was subsequently followed up by BUFORA investigator, David Coggins.

On Sunday morning, 1st June, Rosemary Hughes, 35, was having difficulty in sleeping due to her pregnancy. So she thought she might as well do something useful. At about 5.30 am, being a bright and sunny morning, she was hanging out some washing in the garden. To her astonishment she noticed a large silver cigar-shaped object hanging in the sky. There was no sound. Mrs Hughes later observed that the birds were very quiet, and the lack of a 'dawn chorus' seems to have impressed her. Also, it was thought that there was no wind at ground level. She

had the presence of mind to observe it carefully and after about five minutes went to arouse her husband. She admitted to being no judge of distance, but her husband thought that the object might have been as close as a few hundred yards.

By the time he saw it, at about 7.45 am, it had moved some distance. He was in time to see it go into a cloud, not much larger than the object, and this was apparently the only cloud in the sky. Mr Hughes likened the shape to an aluminium cigar container.

He said that a jet airliner flew directly overhead at fairly low level, therefore making a lot of noise. He wondered if it was diverted to look for the UFO, which was by now hidden in the cloud. The aircraft appeared to be heading from the direction of Rhoose Airport about nine miles to the south-west of Llandaff. The RAF base at St Athan is about three miles west of Rhoose. The Hughes waited about ten minutes for the silver object to reappear from the cloud, which was slowly drifting away. It did not reappear.

On telephoning RAF St Athan, Mr Hughes was put through to an officer authorised to take details using a standard questionnaire. The officer was polite, and one of his questions was, "Was there any unusual smell?" which surprised Mr Hughes. (This question is, incidentally, included in the basic BUFORA R2 report form). His reply was No. I wondered if Mr Hughes could have seen the GOODYEAR airship *Europa*. However, this seems unlikely as no irregular features such as passenger cabin or tail fins were observed. Also the droning of *Europa's* engines is distinctive. They did however observe a lateral band around the cigar-shaped object, which was otherwise rather featureless. *Europa* was based at Doncaster for a few days including June 1st. It moved to Rhoose Airport on 5th June for a week's stay and was seen in the Cardiff area.

The Hughes also saw *Europa* and were satisfied that they had seen something totally different on June 1st. David Coggins told me that there was a similar sighting over Pontypridd (about nine miles north-west of Llandaff) a few years earlier. At about 6 am on 21st May (1976?), Mrs Rowlands and her daughter reported seeing a round saucer object. It turned onto its side and became an elongated cigar-shaped object which appeared to be rotating.

Other reports

In the last issue of *Alpha 1* summarised the case of Robert Taylor, 61, a Scottish forestry

foreman, who came across a dome-shaped object of over 20 feet across in a forest clearing near the M8 motorway on 9th November 1979. I failed to emphasise a very significant feature of the 'caterpillar' tracks found formed in the grass under the position of the object.

There were no signs of any depressions in the ground under the marks in the grass, as one would have expected if a heavy object had been standing there. The story is reported in the *JOURNAL OF TRANSIENT AERIAL PHENOMENA* No. 2, and a little more fully in *Flying Saucer Review* Vol.25 No. 6. FSR states that when Mr Taylor regained consciousness following the assault by two circular spiked objects, his face in the mud, he heard a 'whoosing' noise, and his dog was barking furiously. He had an intense headache and a pain on his chin as if it were burned. He also felt sick and had an intense thirst. Altogether it must have been a rather unpleasant encounter!

The *Sunday Independent* of Plymouth, 17.2.80., published a blurred photograph of a dustbin-lid shaped object. It was allegedly seen by 17 people on Kit Hill, a local beauty spot in Cornwall near Callington. John Bredin (of Hatt near Saltash) took the picture using a zoom lens on Sunday 13th January, while with his wife and children. "It had a sort of bluey-green and red colours on it and a pointed roof." One man said, "Look, there's Dr Who's Tardis." Another witness said flames and smoke were shooting from the bottom of it and it looked like a massive dustbin without handles. A brief report in the *South Devon Journal* of 17.4.80. mentions a woman who reported seeing a 7 to

8 foot high, silver-suited being with a black visor. Can anyone supply further details?

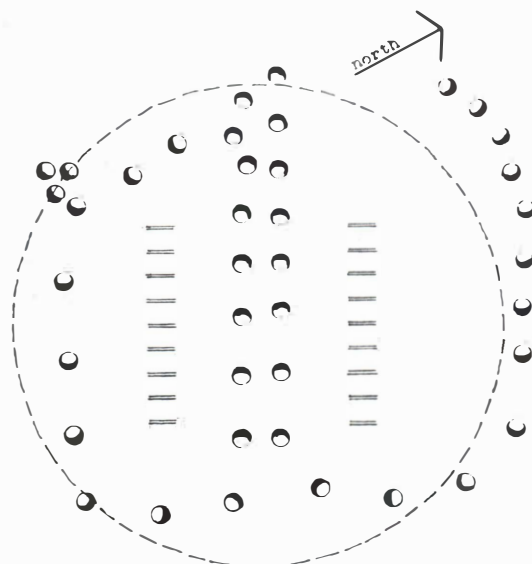
The problems of Iran

On the night of 18/19th September 1976, two Iranian Air Force jet fighters were sent to intercept a brightly glowing UFO. When they came within 25 nautical miles of the object, they experienced temporary communications failure. The UFO was said to have fired a 'missile' at the second jet, but the 'missile' eventually returned to the UFO. This report attracted wide interest at the time.

The current political situation in Iran is highly confused and likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. However, amongst the propaganda, stories are coming out to suggest that there may be something of interest for ufologists. The *Halifax Evening Courier* of 4.6.80. carried some details, saying Iran had accused the USA of sending flying saucers, unmanned helicopters and weather balloons.

An 'army political military expert' was quoted as saying that flying saucers were being sent into Iranian airspace as an American provocation to frighten the Iranian public. The expert told the *Islamic Revolutionary Newspaper* that flying saucers and pilotless helicopters had been launched from US naval vessels cruising off the Strait of Hormuz in the sea of Oman, and had been remotely controlled from American ships. The nature of these objects and rockets was top secret, and only a few people in the US knew about them. The Governor-General of the south-western sistan was quoted as saying that nomads had discovered a giant balloon in the desert equipped with radio receivers and other electronic instruments bearing strange

Police diagram of position of caterpillar tracks and holes



UFO REPORT

writings. Meteorological Office experts have said that the object did not fit the description of any balloon that they had ever used. Further details are eagerly awaited!

Erich von Däniken

I am not an Erich von Däniken fan, but went along to Wembley's spacious Conference Centre on 20th June to hear his slide-illustrated lecture. Von Däniken, now 45, was promoting his seventh book, *Signs of the Gods?*, which proposes that mankind is watched over and descended from extraterrestrial supermen. Of the 2,500 deep-foam seats, only 550 (at £1 each) had been sold, and this was a one-night stand before he flew off to New Zealand.

He discussed furrows or grooves, generally to be found in pairs in limestone outcrops on Malta. Some run into the sea. He said that they could not have been 'rails' as they were not parallel. I may have missed the point about the furrows, but von Däniken told us that Malta possessed 30 megalithic temples, and these made him think of giants. He pointed out that there was plenty of evidence for giants in mythology and they were mentioned in the Bible.

He went on to discuss stories of women giving birth to giants or dying in the process. There were he claimed, showing two slides, giant human footprints contemporary with those of dinosaurs. Von Däniken then turned to the Old Testament manna, which had enabled the followers of Moses to survive in the wilderness. Was it (1) a small red fruit that did not grow in Sinai? (2) a lichen? (3) a honeyed insect secretion? (4) a flight of birds? "Enough to make a donkey laugh", he said, or (5) the product of a sophisticated machine? (It turned out during question time that Rodney Dale and George Sassoon, authors of "The Manna Machine", were amongst the audience). Clearly their book had impressed Erich. They had concluded that the obscure Book of Zohar, gave a detailed account of the Manna food machine. It was known as the 'Ancient of Days', and was capable of being disassembled and it was proposed that our seven day week derived from its servicing schedule. A double ration of manna was allocated the day before the Sabbath!

Von Däniken said that machines of this type would be indispensable for long space flights. He wondered why it had been necessary for the Children of Israel to spend 40 years in the wilderness, and why it was that only the

second generation reached the Land of "Pro-mize". Could genetic engineering have been carried out during their isolation?

He described the gold-lined Ark of the Covenant, which only the Levite priests were allowed to approach, and only when wearing special (protective?) clothing. The Ark allegedly brought sickness and death to those who approached it without due care. Was it therefore a radioactive fuel source for the Ancient of Days? Erich thought that the Ark was latterly taken from King Solomon's temple to Ethiopia, and was now in the vicinity of a Coptic Church. Political problems and a blunt refusal from the Church had prevented him from pursuing this line of enquiry.

Although von Däniken said that he was a committed Christian, he stressed that many world religions spoke of superior beings, and had traditions that these beings would return in the future. The Hopi Indians for example, had a ceremony commemorating such a visit. He suggested that time-dilation due to light-speed space travel would permit the same 'being' to revisit the Earth many generations or millennia later. He spoke of "prooves" and apologised for his lisping English, saying that he was out of practice. About 16 questions followed the one and a half-hour long talk. Inevitably the Nasca plateau lines came up.

Von Däniken bitterly complained about being unfairly treated by the press, and especially by the BBC TV *Horizon* programme on the Nasca lines. He said that he wrote that Nasca looked like an airport — not that it was an airport. He dealt confidently with the questions and is clearly far better read than he was. The audience listened attentively and clapped politely. Their reaction was mixed; some told me that they were impressed, and some clearly were not. The crush and excitement that accompanied his talk at the New Gallery in London's Regent Street in 1973, when he was promoting *Gold of the Gods*, was gone.

Magazines

If you can tolerate a few typing mistakes and want topicality, one of the most newly duplicated UFO magazines is definitely *Mapit Skywatch*. Write to David Rees, 92 Hillcrest Road, Offerton, Stockport, SK2 5SE, for details.

Readers interested in a broad range of thoughtful material would do well to peruse *Fortean Times* produced by Bob Rickard and colleagues. The Spring 1980 issue contains three articles of

interest to ufologists. The first, "Gateways To Mystery" by David Fideler of Michigan, proposes that 'telluric' (of the earth) discharges occur in areas of major geological faulting.

These 'windows' or 'gateways' periodically give rise to a variety of weird phenomena including entity reports, spontaneous combustion and luminous plasmas and so on. Fideler also suggests some possible causes.

The subject matter is very similar to that dealt with by Paul Devereux in his BUFORA lecture on 7th June at the Kensington Library attended by 130 people.

The second article, *Wormology* by Nigel Watson is a sort of lampoon on encounter reports. The third article collated by Bob Rickard, *Lights and Fireballs*, provides a useful summary of more recent ball-lightning and related reports. Humour is provided in the form of PHENOMENIX (Tales of Misunderstanding), a cartoon strip with a saucer theme. Three reports are summarised, three UFO books are reviewed, and there is a useful list of UFO magazines. Articles on *Maned Mystery Cats* and *Little People* will be of passing interest. Could it be that *Fortean Times* subconsciously wants to become a UFO magazine?

Journal UFO published by UK-born David Haisell (PO Box 455, Streetsville, Mississauga, Ontario, L5M 2B9) incorporates *Canadian UFO Report*, and John Magor the former editor, contributes a regular column. Vol. 2 No. 1 1980 contains the case of a police car which collided with a UFO on 27th August 1979, near Stephen, Minnesota. (This case was also reported in the May issue of *Fate* magazine). Besides other interesting Canadian cases, there is an article on MIB, one on using USA official information sources, a contribution by the Earl of Clancarty and much more.

Arise Sir Saucer!

When I visited the *Alpha* stand at the Festival of Mind, Body and Spirit at Olympia, I looked to see if there was any UFO interest on other stands. Apart from a couple of fringe magazines, there was only the Aetherius Society selling health foods, from a well-appointed centrally-situated site. Towards the latter part of the week, they were also occupying a second stand.

Loosely speaking, the Society is a para-religious organisation that claims telepathic contact with extraterrestrial 'masters'.

Displayed prominently on a wall of their main stand was a sign reading "SPEAK TRUTH TO

FIND TRUTH — SIR GEORGE KING" — his name being spelt out in pink fluorescent capitals. I was informed that the title "Sir" had been awarded in American by Prince Khimchiachvili of Rome, 74th Grand Master of the Sovereign, Military and Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem, Knights of Malta, on 26th April 1980.

Members of the Aetherius Society insisted that this was a recognised Order, but were unable to say who recognised it. From other sources, I was led to understand that this was not an 'Alliance' Order, meaning that it was not recognised in the UK. Richard Lawrence, Secretary of the European end of the Aetherius Society (it also has premises in California) was unable or unwilling to supply me with the address of The Order. He also told me to be very careful what I wrote.

Events

In case anyone wondered, the tailpiece of my column in the last issue was mislaid. Consequently the 1980 MUFON Symposium at Clear Lake City, near the Johnson Space Center, Texas, 7-8 June, was omitted. The MUFON Symposium is probably the most important annual event on the ufologists calendar. This year it was hosted by VISIT (Vehicle Internal Systems Investigative Team), a small group of professional people and scientists. Their aim is to see what operational and engineering systems can be identified from abduction cases. Consequently the 1980 Symposium took as its theme "A Detailed Examination of UFO Technology".

Speakers due to participate included John Schuessler (Symposium Chairman), James Oberg, Ray Stanford, Dr Leo Sprinkle, Fred Merritt of CUFOS, Dr Alain Esterle of GEPAN, and Stanton Friedman. Tentative arrangements for 1981 are Boston, Massachusetts in June or July, Toronto, Canada in 1982, and Los Angeles in 1983.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS DIARY

6 September 1980 Close Encounter in Scotland — Stuart Campbell. (BUFORA) Kensington Library
4 October 1980 Sirius Mystery — Robert Temple (BUFORA)
18-19 October 1980 SUFOI Conference, Copenhagen, Denmark

6 December 1980 AGM, and Lecture by Alan Watts (BUFORA)
24-25 May 1981 2nd London International UFO Congress
June/July 1981 12th Annual MUFON Symposium, Boston, USA

HEALING

The gentle revolution

HOW PEOPLE come to consult healers in the first place is a study in its own right. After all, most people know little or nothing about spiritual healing but may be tempted to give it a try if they know someone who has benefitted from it. In the absence of personal recommendation, they may learn about healing from an article or broadcast. Either way, it is largely a matter of happenstance.

The local population of Newbury, though, is probably better served with information than most other communities. Thanks to the positive approach of Rose Dawson and the members of her group the town's residents have a higher than average opportunity of learning the facts about healing. She has, in a purposeful manner, taken healing to the people.

Following an inspiration to persuade Reading's local radio station, Radio 210, to give air time to the group's activities in 1977, Rose was invited to become a resident on 210's "A question of conscience" programme that hosts discussions on healing and a wide variety of subjects and deals with phone-in questions. The breakthrough might have been harder if Rose had not gained immediate support from the programme's presenter, Mike Matthews, after she sorted out his back problems.

In addition to broadcasting, Rose lectures to groups locally, from the Women's Institute to the Rotary Club. Being "something of an extrovert, I'm happy to talk to anyone who wants to learn about spiritual healing."

Success

But nothing publicises healing more effectively than successful cures and there have been several in the past few years, none more dramatic perhaps than the case of young Tracy Stone.

After contracting measles in 1978, Tracy, then 14, developed more disturbing symptoms that led her parents to take her to the Royal Berks Hospital. "That was on a Friday," says Tracy's father David Stone. "But following an examination, they sent her home." The next day her condition had deteriorated: Tracy kept losing her balance and had become incontinent. By Sunday morning, she was partially paralysed. "We panicked."

This time Tracy was admitted to Radcliffe hospital for

investigation. At one stage, doctors speculated that the root cause could have been a tumour or abscess. But finally they identified her condition as a rare complication that can follow an attack of measles and affects the central nervous system.

Since the onslaught of the symptoms at the weekend, the paralysis continued to creep up Tracy's body until the Tuesday when it stopped just above her waist. It was an ordeal for both daughter and parents. "I remember being nearly hysterical," recalls her father. "I was prepared to sell my home to raise cash for a specialist or do anything."

Unfortunately, there was not much that could be done. Tracy was sent to Reading's Battle hospital for further treatment. It was at this stage that Tracy's mother heard of Rose Dawson from an acquaintance. "I never thought I would get in touch with a healer," says David Stone. But in these circumstances he was prepared to try any avenue.

The Stones asked Rose to visit their daughter in hospital and David Stone remembers wondering whether to tell the ward sister who, in the event, turned out to be totally sympathetic. "She told me that considering the situation we were in, she would have done the same."

By this time, the doctors looking after Tracy had concluded that there was little more they could do. "We were told that she would have to spend the rest of her life in a wheelchair," says Tracy's father.

On her first visit, Rose followed her normal practice. "I started by having a long talk to Tracy, a very shy girl, and then gave her acupuncture treatment." On the second occasion, a few days' later, Tracy said she could feel her toes. "On the third visit," says Rose, "the doctors treating Tracy said that they would like to see me. They asked me to explain what was happening: they didn't know. So I explained what I understood about spiritual healing."

Prognosis contradicted

The interview ended with the doctors asking what they could do to help. "I said that I was able to stimulate Tracy, but they had the facilities to build up her muscles again." On a regime of healing and physiotherapy, Tracy rapidly regained her mobility and strength. Within six weeks she was back at school again. Much to everyone's astonishment and pleasure Tracy contradicted the original grim

prognosis and is growing up a normal, healthy girl.

Even her parent's move to a bungalow — made in anticipation of Tracy's restriction to a wheel chair, turned out to be fortuitous. In the early stages of Tracy's paralysis, her parents promised that she would have a pony when she recovered. The bungalow gave them the necessary extra grounds and Tracy has her pony. As a symbol of their gratitude, the Stones called their new home Rose Cottage.

Not surprisingly, the remarkable story of Tracy's recovery was picked up by the local papers and focused attention on the work that Rose was doing. "It's important to have a group behind you when you receive publicity so that you can meet any burst of demand," she adds.

The Newbury Healing Group, of which Rose is chairman, has seven healers plus the same number of probationers. The group works together, one night a week in a local church hall. In 1979, between 15 and 45 people an evening came for healing free of charge, and the group's records show that 2356 treatments were given during the year. In addition, members treat patients at their homes or places of work.

Discovered

In common with so many other healers, Rose discovered her own talent after being treated by a local healer, in her case for back trouble. And, like so many others who are told they can heal, she was reluctant to act on the information. Finally, she was scolded into action when she went to the same healer for help on behalf of her daughter who was suffering from a grumbling appendix. "She really tore me off a strip and told me to go and put

my hands on her myself". Rose did just that and her daughter never suffered from appendix pain again. That was in 1971 and from then on she has become increasingly involved in healing.

There were momentary hesitations in the early days: "In the beginning you do wonder if you should be doing this at all," says Rose. "But when you come face to face with complete cures, you realise it's a responsibility you can't turn down." On the other side of the coin, there are the failures. "I used to be afraid of failure. Now I accept it. If there's something in a patient's background or karma that is the cause of their illness, there's nothing I can do about it." Having said that, Rose claims to have subdued pain in the case of chronic cancer sufferers "so that they can die normally."

In 1974 she became a member of a local healing group, helping to build up its work in the local community. First, there were meetings in a church hall and later came the broadcasts along with the release of stories about successful cures to the local press.

Today the group is a member of the West Berkshire Health Community Council and the Newbury Umbrella, an organisation representing all the town's major bodies. People no longer have to rely on chance remarks to find out about the group's existence. Its address and details about its activities are available at the council offices, library, citizens' advice bureau and elsewhere. Local GPs have referred patients to the group. As Rose explained to a conference run by the National Federation of Spiritual Healers in February, it shows what can be achieved with determination and patience. In its quiet way, her group is spearheading a gentle revolution for the cause of healing.

David Harvey

SCIENCE OF MIND

is a philosophy and teaching that leads you to a true understanding of your identity as a spiritual being in a spiritual universe, and helps you to use the power of that identity for a richer, fuller life in the here and now.

PUBLIC LECTURES at Caxton Hall, 7.30 pm on March 25; April 15 and 29. Thereafter generally the 2nd and 4th Thursday in every month. Programmes on request 01-399 1206.

PHENOMENA

By the editors of *Fortean Times*, a quarterly journal continuing the work of Charles Fort (1874-1932), pioneer collector of accounts and explanations of strange phenomena.

Those interested in fuller coverage of these stories and the widest possible range of strange phenomena are invited to send for a sample copy of *Fortean Times* at the special rate of 75p, or \$3.00 airmail, or write for details to: Fortean Times (AP), 9-12 St Annes Court, London W1, England.

REMEMBER the 'talking tortoise' that panicked ex-President Amin of Uganda? (See *Fortean Times* 27). Now we hear of a talking elephant in Soviet Kazakhstan.

Batyr, a 10 year-old Indian elephant at the Karaganda zoo can say things like "Batyr is good," and verbs like "drink" and "give", a young communist league newspaper reported. A recording of the elephant's voice was heard on the Kazakh state radio.

"He just pushes his trunk into his mouth and starts talking," said the zoo's deputy director. It began three years ago when a startled night watchman reported he had heard the elephant talking to itself. (*Telegraph* 9 April 1980).

The following month, a white elephant was born in Thailand's southern Petchaburi province, the fourth to be found during the reign of King Bhumibol, and a good omen for him too. It will be presented to him after an examination by experts. (*Times* 23 May 1980.)

The Matabele people of southern Zimbabwe have new troubles to add to their misery at losing in the recent post-Independence elections. Since April they have been living in mortal fear of famine and disease. The cause, they believe, is the reported birth, somewhere near Bulawayo, of a baby which had a full set of teeth and a beard, and which could speak. Tribal law decrees that freak births are either punishment for adultery or the result of demonic possession, but new laws have outlawed the old practice of infanticide in such cases. By letting the child live, the Matabele believe she has let loose hoards of evil spirits. (*Sunday Express* 13 April 1980.)

Ice bomb

EDWARD FOX, of Northerwood Avenue, Lyndhurst, Hampshire, was summoned home by a neighbour who had heard an explosion over Mr Fox's house and feared the worst. Fox arrived back to discover a huge hole (about 4ft by 2ft) in his bedroom ceiling, and large chunks of ice all over the

room. The incident happened at about 3pm on 14th April.

The ice-bomb, estimated to be the size "of a large bucket" hit the roof, scattering lumps into the garden, before shearing a rafter and demolishing the plaster and lathe ceiling. Luckily Fox's wife was at work, and their child, who usually sleeps in the room, was staying with grandma nearby. The usual vapourings about 'falling off a plane' were made, and as expected Civil Aviation Authority searches for likely culprits were ineffectual. (*Daily Express* 15 April 1980 (*Lymington Times* 19 April).)

Matthew Grossman was waxing his car, outside his home at Lido Beach, California, admiring its shatter-proof glass sun-roof, when it shattered. A chunk of ice, about six-inches in diameter according to the dismayed and startled Grossman, ruined his car before his very eyes. As frequently happens in the deplorable standard of media phenomena reporting, no mention is made of the colour of the ice or other useful details, like the date of the incident — but we deduce it happened in the second week of May. Grossman and his brother recall a plane being in the area at the time of the incident, and authorities have promised to "look into it" Oh yeah? (*Newsday*, California, 10 May 1980.)

Something — "a meteor, or whatever it was" — sliced cleanly through ice one-foot thick on a lake at Cumberland, Maine, leaving a hole 4ft by 1ft, sometime during the third week of March. Once again no date, or other useful details. (*Middlesex News*, New England, 18 May 1980.)

At lam, on the night of 9 April, many hundreds of people saw a spectacular luminous display in the night sky of Wales. Police received hundreds of calls from Staffordshire, Shropshire, Derbyshire, Manchester and South Wales.

Doris Smith, of Trench, near Telford, described the light as a "blinding flash followed by blue spots". Some reported several big flashes and falling debris. Others reported "a rumbling noise" and the sound of a blast. Although this is almost certainly due to a meteor, there were faint echoes of that mystery event over Llandrillo, in the Berwyn mountains, on 23 January 1974, during which aerial lights, strange rumblings and detonations, and detectable seismic waves, appeared to indicate the bizarre coincidence of a meteorite display and a minor earth tremor in the same place. (See *Fortean Times* 5.) Main story from *Shropshire Star* 10 April 1980.

And speaking of mystery tremors...we note the return of the phantom quakes of the Staffordshire Potteries (See FT12 & 16). During 1976 the tremors were coming at the rate of about 12 per week, and neither collapsing mineshafts nor underground blasting — the area is riddled with coal mines — could be found to blame.

Despite questions in parliament about the problem, and over a hundred claims for damages pending the discovery of the perpetrator by rattled Stoke-on-Trent residents, the origin of the tremors has not been found to date. The latest series frightened the residents of Burslem, Newcastle and Longton areas, and although lasting only seconds, caused people to evacuate their houses, some being injured in the panic. (*Shropshire Star* 11 June 1980.)

Lawrence of Arabia mystery

ON 28 FEBRUARY was published *The Murder of Lawrence of Arabia*, dealing with the mysterious black car said to have been involved in his death. The *Evening News* of the previous day carried a letter from Patrick O'Neill about one of his visits to Lawrence's cottage at Clouds Hill where he had an eerie encounter.

On a balmy afternoon he was strolling down a lane leading from the cottage. He had had an article on Lawrence's strange death recently published, and he was thinking about the black car episode, when "for some reason" he looked over his shoulder to see a black car creeping towards him. When it reached him one of the men leaned out and offered him a lift to Dorchester. He refused, the two men gave each other a look, and then the car turned into a another lonely stretch of road and was gone. Mr O'Neill omits details about the clothing of the men, but we are tempted to assume that they were dressed in black. Perhaps the car was an old model, but strangely new-looking...

EDWIN ROBINSON, 62, blinded in an accident 9 years previously, regained his sight after he was struck by lightning, near his home in Falmouth, Maine. He was knocked to the ground by the bolt when he took shelter under a tree during a storm on 6 June. His wife said he could also hear, now, without his hearing aid. (*Telegraph* 7 June 1980.)

If the cases of Jim Naso and Danny Winter are anything to go by, baldness can be cured by burning the scalp. 54 year-old Naso was badly burned over 50 per

cent of his body when his yacht blew up off the New Jersey coast on 1st July last year. Having been bald for 30 years, he is now the proud owner of a full head of hair. 30 years of baldness also came to an end for 75 year-old Winter, in August last year. He went for a walk in Hastings, Kent, and had his bald pate sprayed with hot tar from a road-surfacing machine. (*Telegraph* 8 July & *Sunday Express* 29 August 1980.)

FROM HAIRY pates we turn to hairy monsters. Creatures resembling men with hair all over their bodies are constantly reported from mountainous (and not so mountainous) regions all over the world. Inconclusive evidence in the form of hair, footprints, excreta and blurred film images have been accumulating for some time. Now comes news of an actual skeleton, said to have been discovered by two girls in Northern California over ten years ago. They told Bigfoot hunter Wayne King who is mounting an expedition to find it.

The girls came upon the skeleton while playing in the mountains near their home. It was eight feet long with a four foot chest-span, and with its head up against a tree as if resting. It had copper-coloured fingernails and enormous hands. The arms were outstretched and the legs tucked in. It looked more like a man than a gorilla (a gorilla skeleton in California would be pretty odd anyway.)

The girls felt they were being watched by someone or something and ran away never to return...until now. One of them has promised to lead King to the site. It all sounds a touch dubious, but you never know. Keep an eagle eye out for further developments. (*Midnight Globe* 5 Feb 1980.)

A curious old clipping came our way recently, showing that Amityville, Long Island, played host to a horrible something long before the Lutzes dreamed up their 'Terror' of their alleged house of damnation. Early on the morning of 4 September 1934, Miss Madeline Aberbathy, in South Amityville, was woken by a fearful chattering and yowling, and later she and a policeman found footprints, eight inches long, very spatulate, with long clawmarks. The beast had torn up a fur coat and several mattresses and clawed an old car in the garage. The animal, described by some as a "large monkey", had been seen several times in the previous ten days. Residents armed themselves with firearms and garden hoses, as the *New York Herald Tribune* (5 September 1934) asked: "Man, Beast or Demon?"

The Enfield poltergeist

Chief investigator Maurice Grosse discusses the attitudes and reactions of those who encountered the strange phenomena . . . and those who did not.

The investigation of the Enfield Poltergeist proved something of a breakthrough, if only for the mass of evidence accumulated over such a long period. Guy Lyon Playfair in his book *This House is Haunted* has adequately dealt with the story surrounding the strange happenings, but I am frequently asked for my views and reactions to my experience in this field.

That the case was genuine, there can be no doubt whatsoever. Hundreds of events were experienced by both investigators and witnesses, and as far as I am personally concerned, as the so-called "chief investigator", I consider myself privileged to have been involved in such remarkable phenomena.

When I first visited the house in September 1977, I had no idea what lay ahead. I recognised, almost at once, that here was a genuine centre of inexplicable activity that had all the signs of being a case worth investigating. Uppermost in my mind was the welfare of the family, as they were obviously terrified, and yet at the same time I had to tackle the problem of investigating their unseen guest.

That I managed to do both might have been more luck than judgment, but my decision to give them the benefit of my knowledge of the subject and at the same time enlist their help in the investigation, paid handsome dividends. It enabled me and my colleagues to be at one and the same time friends, welfare workers, and investigators. Without this situation I believe it would have been impossible to carry on as we did over such a long period.

From time to time Guy Playfair and I discussed our method of investigating the case, but we decided that as long as we used our initiative, combined with meticulous care and a sprinkling of healthy scepticism, we would be able to view and judge the events as clearly as possible. As far as working to rules were concerned, what rules were we to apply to such extraordinary activity? Should we apply the rules of the physicist, the psychologist, the philosopher or any other particular discipline? We decided to "play it by ear." It is fortunate for us that we did, for at times the phenomena were coming so thick and fast we barely had time to note down what was happening. I did remember, however, to keep up a lively commentary to my tape recorder, and this I managed to do even under moments of extreme stress.

Looking back I suppose that stress was our biggest problem. Everybody involved in the case was subject to tremendous pressures for months on end, but it seemed that we were sustained both mentally and

physically by the fascination of the extraordinary events.

I am frequently asked whether we were duped by fraud and trickery, and I can only answer that I consider it to have been impossible to be fooled for such a long period by childish antics, and at the same time to be continuously deceived by the evidence of our own senses, let alone the evidence produced by our equipment.

Contrary to popular belief, poltergeist activity does not cover just psychokinetic events but embraces practically the whole spectrum of psychic phenomena. It is true to say that the more spectacular of the events that took place in Enfield surrounded the movement of physical objects that defied any logical explanation in terms of quantifiable physics. We must be careful, therefore, in our analysis of the phenomena, not to concentrate on the most spectacular at the expense of other events more mundane, but nevertheless just as important is the overall picture presented by the case.

I refer particularly to events that could be relegated to the background with the glib explanation that they could have been the pure imaginings of the people involved in the situation. These events include such things as apparitions, apparent telepathic communication, shared dreams, innumerable so-called "coincidences", headaches that came and went with the phenomena, appearance of fire and water, trances or altered states of consciousness, interference with electrical and mechanical equipment. Raudive-type voices, dopple gänger effects, etc. All these events and many more besides were often experienced by individuals involved in the case.

I think that any person weighing the evidence produced for the existence of paranormal phenomena in poltergeist cases must eventually come down in favour of its authenticity. The evidence built up over many years cannot be dismissed just because it comes from spontaneous phenomena and not from repeatable laboratory experiments. Fortunately, more enlightened scientists are beginning to appreciate that good evidence is not necessarily repeatable or qualified. However, when we come to the necessity of producing explanations for our evidence, that is an entirely different matter. Then the arguments flow thick and fast, and explanations range from accusations of downright fraud to theories that would do justice to the most outlandish science fiction writer. However, it is a fact of life that the activity in whatever form it takes continues to be ignored by the majority of

scientists, and I believe this happens for the following reason.

Instead of helping to solve problems in a limited and specialised field, the acceptance of paranormal phenomena demands an expansion of that field to include problems that arise outside it. However, rather than admit that scientific knowledge today may be deficient in some facts and may need expansion, most scientists prefer to look the other way when they are invited to pay attention to what appear to be illogical events. They pretend either that they do not exist or that they are of no importance.

This is a strange attitude for scientists to take, because again and again in the annals of science it has often been the odd fact that did not conform with current thinking that lead to the great discovery. No doubt our psychologist friends could come up with sound theories to explain this reluctance to face facts or seek the truth, but unfortunately a great number of psychologists are guilty of the same error.

A particular statement by a physicist that an incident could not have happened because it defies all known laws, does not mean that the incident did not take place. It merely means, no more no less, that the particular person making that statement cannot overcome a personal belief that his knowledge is the basis of ultimate truth. History is strewn with remnants of scientific theories that in their days were the last words on the secrets of the universe. Even in these days of continuing scientific enlightenment, this type of arrogant thinking still persists. Unfortunately, a lot of statements made by eminent scientists denying the very existence of psychic phenomena are based on a crass ignorance of the subject, but because they are learned in their particular disciplines, their statements are treated as being authoritative. It is a sad reflection on our society that specialisation has tended to narrow horizons rather than broaden them.

Any investigation of a poltergeist case comes in for a lot of "stick", and the Enfield case was no exception. So-called experts descended on the house expecting to experience phenomena to order, and when it was not forthcoming some went away muttering that it was probably all a "put-up-job". At first I found this sort of attitude most irritating, but after a while we just ignored the hostility and got on with the job on hand. I had decided very early on in the case that no matter how it progressed, it would stand or fall by the quality of evidence that was produced. Little did I know at the time that it would

turn out such a wealth of material.

As time went on I realised how complicated the phenomena were, and that the long-accepted "explanations" seemed to be totally inadequate in the light of our experiences. The point that became very clear to me was that the scientist or psychologist had no right whatsoever to claim superior talents in explaining away these strange and mysterious events. After all, if we take all our knowledge, and all our sophisticated electronic equipment and we bring it to bear on the problems and mysteries of paranormal activity, what do we achieve? We usually come up with some

very interesting or very boring statistics that may or may not prove that there is a bias of mathematical differential in one direction or the other. We never prove beyond any shadow of doubt that what we have experienced is behaving according to known physical laws.

We must not forget, and we were reminded of this fact many times, that the mystics and the Spiritualists claim to have the answers to all our phenomena. Maybe they have, but I am inclined to believe that their explanations are far too simple. During our investigations we came across

practically every type of paranormal activity, combined with some very strange psychological behaviour, but in the final analysis we were at a complete loss to understand the workings of even the most straightforward effects that we encountered. But it is also true, that as knowledge of the subject progresses, and more and more experiments and investigations are conducted, more evidence is amassed for the existence of the phenomena. In fact, we are approaching the stage now when even some of our most hardened critics are beginning to bend under the weight of the evidence produced.

How D.D. Home got his feat off the ground?

Did the most famous medium of Victorian times really levitate himself out of one window and in through another? Archie Jarman offers an alternative explanation.

CHARLES DARWIN, observer of the strange and grotesque, did not easily surprise. But he may have raised an eyebrow on learning that he probably gave a strong impetus to Spiritualism in the last century.

Modern Spiritualism, so unlikely a Darwinian product, was imported from the USA in the 1850s. Until Darwin's rude intrusion, man had insisted that he was created in the image of God. But the great naturalist with his *Origin of Species*, (1859) followed by *The Descent of Man*, suggested otherwise. He proved that mankind, rather than being a God-son was a direct descendent of a rather superior ape. The Establishment and others were shocked and indignant.

However the Hydesville rappings by the "spirits" at the home of the Fox family, and what followed, showed Darwin wrong and the Spiritualists right. Man was still constructed in the image of God and talk of simian ancestry was blasphemy. Conversation with the 'spirits' proved Man to be a spiritual being. Apes, on the contrary, were in no way spiritual.

Ancient faith assailed, what solid evidence could be offered by the Spiritualists?

Following Hydesville, mediums multiplied and by 1860 it was said that 15,000 in the United States alone were working on a strictly cash basis. Fathers, mothers, aunts and cousins came clambering from their graves in hurrying hordes. Defunct statesmen, dead poets, painters and presidents hastened to the seance room to give messages through their mediums. True, the talk was trivial and they were oddly reluctant to describe the

spirit world in which they then dwelt. But generally it was agreed to be like our present abode, cities and all, but much more beautiful since no one there paid any income tax.

It was a grimy scene but the faithful were not deterred. The industry boomed.

Yet even the faithful wearied of Spirit Teachings and wanted something more spectacular. Demand creates supply, so swarms of "physical mediums" appeared. With them came materialisations of the dead, together with increased sales of butter-muslin from the Lancashire mills. Apart from a dim glimpse of the late and loved ones, the rapt audience was treated to a display of flashing lights, clashing cymbals, apports and showers of flowers. These, of course, occurred in the dark since neither the mediums nor the spirits cared for the light.

But from time to time evil-minded sceptics attended. Often scuffles and undignified scenes followed. When these cynics accosted them with torches, the mediums lost their tempers and butter-muslin. Many of the spirits failed to take even elementary precautions and these dingy seance rooms acquired a bad name. The odour of Spiritualism was far from the odour of sanctity. Indeed, the scent was definitely fishy.

However it is not essential to throw out the bath with the baby's water. Cases of psychic ability (the mental variety: telepathy, clairvoyance, etc.) sometimes turned up. Of these the most renowned was that of Mrs Piper. Yet, even of her, the astute Frank Podmore (SPR pioneer and author of *Studies in Psychical Research*: 1897) wrote, "At its worst a sitting with

Mrs Piper is much like a sitting with the ordinary, professional medium: a few lucky shots diluted with apparently disingenuous shuffling and fishing for information..." Clearly, Podmore did not greatly admire the ordinary, professional medium.

Even so, in the field of *physical* mediumship a disturbing character, Eusapia Palladino, appeared at the end of the century. She could produce genuine phenomena when she was not cheating. Eusapia was an Italian peasant, cunning, highly over-sexed (her male sitters could suffer acute embarrassment in the dark seance room unless they arrived adequately armoured) but of rare and authentic ability. True, she deceived simple SPR men like Frederic Myers and Prof William Barrett at Cambridge (1895). But she came across sterner stuff in Naples (1908). Tested by Feilding, Carrington and Baggally, hard-bitten researchers with long knowledge of conjuring and seance room trickery, Eusapia produced some remarkable phenomena.

Yet prior to the ascendancy of the Italian, a far brighter star had appeared in the psychic skies. This was the world-famous Daniel Dunglas Home, a Scots-American who claimed his father to be the natural son of the 10th Earl of Home. At 22 years of age, inspired by the spirits he appeared on the European scene in 1855 and for 15 years gave a series of brilliant performances — never to be matched.

By 30 he was at his peak. In appearance pale, tall, slim, yellowish hair, light china-blue eyes, a gentle and pleasing presence, his pallor stemmed from TB. In trance he was as white as chalk.

Supremely confident and moving easily among the rich and titled, his mediumship was unique:

1. In his 1500 or so sittings he was never detected in fraud or trickery.
2. He attempted always to work in a good light and in this some of his most astonishing phenomena were achieved. Sometimes he worked in lesser illumination such as by lamp or firelight, but he despised alleged *confrères* who always insisted on total darkness.
3. He did not restrict his marvels to his own seance room, which could have been rigged with secret devices as was usually the practice of other supposed mediums. For his work he visited the grand houses and noble palaces of Europe, meagrely dressed, bearing no "box of tricks" nor apparatus. He took with him only his startling and sometimes frightening gift.
4. He did not sit in the usual cabinet, screened from onlookers, but as one of the normal circle of 9 or 10 others.
5. At his seances there were no hymns nor musical hocus pocus to cover clandestine sounds.
6. He refused all monetary payment, although richly rewarded by gifts of precious stones and *objets-d'art*. He insisted on attending his clients as a gentleman and an equal; not as a hired entertainer.
7. His fame was such that the great castles and *chateaux* of the West were open to him as an honoured guest. He was closely befriended and revered by Napoleon III and his Empress Eugenie; the Tzar and Tzarina of Russia; Queen Sophia of the Netherlands; Emperor Wilhelm I of Germany; Prince and Princess Metternich; the Prince Regent of Prussia; the King of Wurttemberg; Prince and Princess Murat and by a score of Grand Dukes and Duchesses. There were the Tolstoy family, Alexandre Dumas and Mme de Balzac and a host of others. Ambassadors treated him with deference and were proud to have him as a friend. His visiting list was as daunting as the *Almanac de Gotha*. Even Pope Pius IX gave him a private audience and his blessing. He was received as an envoy bringing marvels and miracles from another world.

Few have commanded such a galaxy of aristocratic and intellectual admirers. He is the only medium to merit a biography in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* or to have a memorial erected to him in the UK (Edinburgh), though it has now been demolished. In recorded history he is unsurpassed and may always be so.

Yet Home had bitter detractors, public enemies and private foes. Browning, the poet, loathed him and, lax libel laws extant, he made it known. He had seen the medium at work only briefly, had made no complaint and was probably jealous of Home's more flattering attention to his wife, Elizabeth Barrett, than to himself. Apart from his vindictive and venomous poem, *Mr Sludge the Medium*, he described him openly as "vermin", "swindler", "humbug", "charlatan" and, unpoetically, "dungball".

Dickens was another who grossly reviled Home although he had never seen nor sat with him. The medium seems to have inspired either veneration or disgust — and perhaps fear.

Summoned to the Imperial Court in Paris, he stayed only six weeks at the Tuileries. The Emperor and Empress Eugenie became devoted to him, alarming others at the Palace. Beneath its meretricious glitter, the Second Empire was infested by plotting and intrigue. The secret police listened at every door. Home's most powerful enemy was Count Walewski, son of Napoleon and Foreign Minister. Seeing his growing influence on the Empress and fearful of the French rulers being accused of dabbling in Satanism and black magic, he had the medium quietly evicted from France. (50 years later a curiously similar situation arose with regard to the reigning Tzarina and Gregor Rasputin. But there could be no greater contrast between the mild and gentle Home and the wild and drunken monk.)



This was not his only eviction. Retiring to Rome in December 1863 and despite the Pope's blessing, he was arraigned by the Papal Government and abruptly expelled from the city. The charge was sorcery. (Could any medium have a more valuable testimony? And why were Home's miracles held less desirable than those of the Roman Church? Did the Vatican demand a monopoly?)

Home claimed to be surrounded constantly by invisible spirits. Certainly, if this were true, they gave bewildering evidence of their presence. Their eccentric activities were many: when he sat, in trance or not, complete phantom forms would appear, only to melt again into air. Living hands (but no arm nor body!) would greet awed sitters, bearing flowers or a silver bell. Heavy furniture such as massive tables, *armoires*, solid pianos or bookcases with no human hand near them, with Home at a distance, would move about

rapidly. In good light they would rise from the floor and remain suspended for measurable periods. The medium himself would levitate on many occasions while dumbfounded doubters would feel the empty space beneath his feet.

Vases and chalices would remain aloft in the air as though held by invisible hands. Sharp raps, emitted by nothing tangible, would answer questions or, at the Tuileries, the unspoken queries of the Emperor. The great chambers and halls would vibrate violently in Home's presence, sometimes with the noise of a thunder-clap. Musical instruments, such as guitars or accordians, would float about, untouched by humans and said to have played sweet and charming melodies. Handkerchiefs would tie themselves into knots before the eyes of their astounded owners. There were inexplicable flashes as of lightning, luminous clouds and cold breezes in the closed rooms. It was easy to accept that spirits were behind these amazing and sometimes alarming events.

From trance, pale as death, Home claimed to know nothing of these wonders that had so shaken those present. He repeatedly avowed that he had no control whatever over such entities which came or went as they pleased. To accomplish these baffling feats by trickery was admitted impossible by renowned stage magicians like Houdini or Bosco.

Alternative to the "spirit" theory is another. When Home entered the seance room, the temperature would drop sharply. Heat is indestructible but is convertible into energy. Did the medium extract the room-heat and endow the animated furniture with kinetic energy? Anyone encountering a Bechstein grand in full flight would be well aware of a force involved.

Surprising as were the frantic antics of the animated objects, they were akin to poltergeist activity and mainly as meaningless. Pursuing the mind-heat line, were the fleeting but more sophisticated phantoms but energy converted into quasi-matter, fading when the spent energy returned to warmth? Were they, in fact, transient, Jungian psychoids? A lesser physical medium, Stella C., during her vivid display on 19th April, 1923, dropped the mercury by 20.5°F.

Thus perhaps the first and second laws of thermodynamics and the law pertaining to "equal and opposite reaction" may be involved. But only the parapsychologist-physicist familiar with Carnot and Newton might juggle with this abstruse theme. It may be an unlikely theory but we live in an unlikely world. And we cannot escape the question — What happened to that vanished, indestructible heat?

The yellow Press seldom failed to pillory the haughty and distrusted medium. When other news was scanty, he was always good for jeering reportage or a malicious cartoon. Save for Mr William Crookes (later Sir William Crookes, OM, President of the Royal Society, President of the British Association and President of the

Society for Psychical Research) contemporary scientists refused any examination of Home, despite Crookes' stunning tribute to his powers in the laboratory. Their philosophy seemed to be: It is impossible because it is impossible.

The life of a great medium was not without its pitfalls, such as the notorious legal case of *Lyon v. Home*, heard in April 1868. It lasted ten days and the crowds who queued from early morning for the hearing greatly enjoyed themselves. It was as comic as a music-hall and moreover it was free, but it virtually destroyed Home.

In the autumn of 1866 a Mrs Jane Lyon approached him hoping to get in touch with her dead husband. She was a very rich widow of 75, thick-skinned and slightly unbalanced. She had read Home's autobiography but was more impressed by the European royalty and nobility with whom he associated than by his competence as a medium. After a while she suggested that she adopt him as a son and, in any case, would make him independent for life. She then offered him as a gift no less than £60,000 — probably worth £300,000 today. She looked forward to personal friendship with "them high up folk" as she termed his aristocratic devotees.

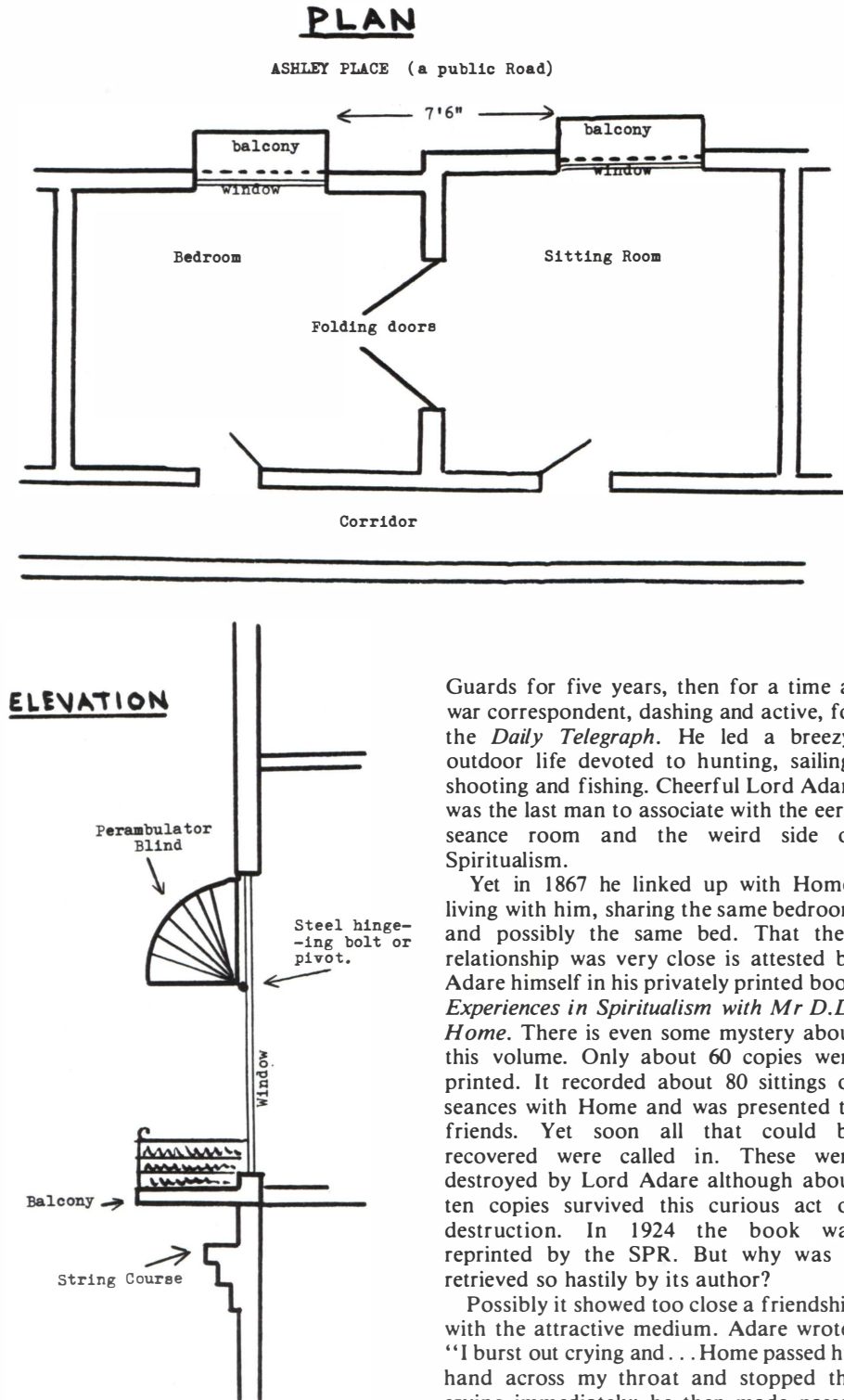
Possessed of no real income, the stupefied Home weakly and imprudently accepted this fortune. To please the old widow, he also accepted her name and by deed poll became Daniel Home Lyon.

Jane Lyon, however, expected her money's worth. Yet when the medium took her about, her excessive affection and vulgarity acutely embarrassed him. Later in court, he testified that she evidently wanted him as rather more than an adopted son. He was then only 34 years old and the idea horrified him. He took refuge in flight although only to English spas where he sought to regain the health that had worsened after his ill-judged bargain.

In June, 1867, the angry widow filed a bill in Chancery alleging extortion and false pretences. Home was arrested but was freed next day on depositing in Court the deed of gift for the total sum she had given him. Perhaps unwisely he decided to defend the case since failure to do so could be construed as an admission of guilt. Thus the fun began. The trial was hilarious comic opera and Victorian melodrama. Cheers and hisses interrupted the advocacy. Laughter was almost continuous. Home and his spirits were highly vulnerable.

The upshot was that the judge held Spiritualism to be an illusion calculated to delude the foolish and Home was ordered to repay the £60,000. In brief, and in international newspapers, the medium had been branded as pseudo and shady. The case being widely publicised, many of his noble friends hastily deserted him and he was still without an income. The only profession he knew was that of mediumship. Discredited, he urgently needed some new spectacular triumph.

A bizarre episode in Home's life (as though it were not all bizarre!) was his



Guards for five years, then for a time as war correspondent, dashing and active, for the *Daily Telegraph*. He led a breezy, outdoor life devoted to hunting, sailing, shooting and fishing. Cheerful Lord Adare was the last man to associate with the eerie seance room and the weird side of Spiritualism.

Yet in 1867 he linked up with Home, living with him, sharing the same bedroom and possibly the same bed. That their relationship was very close is attested by Adare himself in his privately printed book *Experiences in Spiritualism with Mr D.D. Home*. There is even some mystery about this volume. Only about 60 copies were printed. It recorded about 80 sittings or seances with Home and was presented to friends. Yet soon all that could be recovered were called in. These were destroyed by Lord Adare although about ten copies survived this curious act of destruction. In 1924 the book was reprinted by the SPR. But why was it retrieved so hastily by its author?

Possibly it showed too close a friendship with the attractive medium. Adare wrote: "I burst out crying and... Home passed his hand across my throat and stopped the crying immediately; he then made passes over my head and down my side, took my hand and kissed it, kissed my forehead..." Another time, "Home warmed his hands at the fire and commenced 'shampooing' me over my chest, stomach, legs and feet." (The hand-warming suggests that they were applied to Adare's naked body). Another entry was: "Home made me unbutton my waistcoat and... rubbed and patted over my chest, loins and legs." The reference to "loins" (Home was not a medical man) may sound odd.

Fifty-five years later, Lord Adare (then Dunraven) wrote that Home was of a "lovable disposition". The nobleman was certainly very fond of him.

At Ashley House the pair occupied a

intimate association with Lord Adare, he being 26 when they linked up, and Home 34. It bore some semblance to a love-affair. In those narrow days, one reason for Robert Browning's loathing of the medium was his alleged homosexual tendency. Indeed, sexual aberration often goes with mediumship. True that Home married but so did Wilde. A curious parallel may lie in the latter's affection for Lord Alfred Douglas. And another oddity is that while Home and Lord Adare had bedrooms at 5 Buckingham Gate, (the house of Adare's father, the Earl of Dunraven) they maintained a bedroom at Ashley House, a few minutes walk away.

Lord Adare was educated in Paris and at Oxford and afterwards served with the Life

sitting-room and a bedroom. It was here that a coterie of Lord Adare, his cousin Capt. Charles Wynne, Home, and the Master of Lindsay) assembled for seances. These sittings produced fascinating full-figure phantoms, psychic pyrotechnics, body elongations and a good deal other from the extraordinary repertoire offered by their unusual host. It was also the scene of Home's most celebrated psychic feat: levitation out of one window and in through another.

It has been suggested that Home achieved his astonishing effects by hypnotising or hallucinating all his sitters. But even if he had been a powerful hypnotist, he could not have persuaded this trio — apart from the vast number of others who attended him — that they saw events that did not occur. Such mass hypnotism over a long period is unheard of. The suggestion was put before Dr Eric Dingwall, leading living parapsychologist and foremost expert on hypnotism, and he agrees such suggestion to be insupportable.

The two rooms at Ashley House were connected by folding-doors, so Adare wrote to Sir Francis Burnand. The sash-windows opened onto stone balconies about 15 inches wide and running the width of the windows. Lord Lindsay later recorded that the balconies were 7 feet 5 inches apart and it was this gap that Home was supposed to have crossed by means of levitation. An important clue given by Adare was that there was a 6-inch recess in the main wall of the building between the windows.

In his own report Lindsay states, for some odd reason, that Ashley House was sited in Victoria Street. This was the second inaccuracy in giving the proper address as to where the famous levitation took place, since Adare had previously implied distinctly that his remarkable aerial feat had occurred at 5 Buckingham Gate.

I decided to inspect Ashley House, if it still existed. No one at the SPR seemed to know its site; I learned only that several of its members had patrolled Victoria Street (leading from the station to the Abbey) hoping to see some faded "Ashley House" inscription. Their search was vain: this mysterious dwelling had never been in Victoria Street.

However, south of and nearly parallel to that street, was an Ashley Place, probably worth a visit. It was a road which, on one side, contained an office block and, easterly, Westminster Cathedral and its precincts. On the upper side was a grey square building at the corner of Carlyle Place and Ashley Place and, as continuation, a row of neo-Georgian terrace houses erected about 1900, and well after Home's time.

But the grey building seemed to be of the right period although it bore no "Ashley House" legend but was numbered as 1-10 Ashley Place. Through a sidegate I entered the gravel patch at the rear and encountered an elderly artisan in overalls who asked me my business. I said that I was seeking Ashley House and did he know

it? He replied "Yes, you're standing on it. Or rather, that's it." He turned and pointed to the grey building. "Until 1930, the name Ashley House was written in big, gold letters on the glass transom over the main entrance. Then the GPO wanted it re-named 1-10 Ashley Place and the other houses were re-numbered".

My new friend was Jack Schenk (English of Dutch descent) who had been at Ashley House since 1916, working as mate to the builder-caretaker who looked after it. When the older man died, he carried on for the remainder of his 47 years there. It had been built in about 1845 and was the first block of flats in London and also the first building to boast a lift... first hydraulic, then electric. Mr Schenk showed me an Ordnance Map of 1869 revealing the ground-plan then as now. A V-I bomb had landed bang (le mot juste) outside the building in 1944 and had blasted its face with shattering fragments and had blown in the windows. Later repairs were carried out.

Each of the flats (residential in 1868) was now an office suite. Since Home had been flying high, I rose in London's first lift to the topmost, which was occupied by a firm of architects and surveyors. I rather bashfully told of Home's aerial flight to a Mr Perry, a senior member, and was relieved that he did not think me quite mad. Instead he was very interested. I asked if two of his rooms were connected by folding doors. He said, "Yes, come and see them". We walked to the western end of the offices and, between two, were the folding doors. I had arrived.

We measured between the balconies and the distance was as Lindsay had recorded. Adare's 6" recess was also there. The distance to the stone paving below was exactly 45 feet. On the main wall, just below the balconies, ran an architectural feature known as a string-course. This was a kind of cornice, solidly built into the structure, with a flat top about 5" wide. This ran all around the building and connected the two balconies. Did Home cross on this narrow ledge?

The next Saturday when the offices were closed, Mr Schenk placed a ladder up to the second-floor balcony. I climbed this but, placing one foot on the string-course, found a crossing impossible. The adjacent main wall thrust the body's centre of gravity well away and a fall was certain.

From the road again, I searched with binoculars for any other key. At last I found it. At only five of the 60 windows were five narrow blind-boxes, left by the flying bomb of 1944. External boxes meant external blinds. In the Victorian period the "perambulator blind" was fashionable. It is an external half-blind like that of a child's perambulator and still to be seen at some chic restaurants. The principle is the same as that of an ordinary shop-blind, hinging on a steel bolt or pivot so that the blind might be lowered or folded back. The pivot-bolts remaining at Ashley House

were about half-way down the window-reveal and protruded about 3 inches. Each was nearly 1-inch diameter and could easily sustain a scaffold-cord with a breaking strain of, say, 5-cwt.

So with this cord or rope, taut between the two balconies, a man could tread the string-course, which carried his true weight, and be held quite safe by the protective "cord."

I intended to repeat Home's crossing by this means and arranged with Sir George Joy (then Hon. Sec. to the SPR) to attend as witness and with another friend to come with a ciné-camera. Alas, literally I did not get off the ground. Mr Schenk was helpful but firmly insisted that I must first get permission from the ground landlords, the Crown Agents. I approached them but they were even firmer. Too dangerous, they persisted. I offered a written, legal indemnity but they were adamant.

So how did Home cross — by levitation or by the more mundane manner?

My suspicions were aroused by:

1. The medium had repeatedly stated that he had no control over his psychic phenomena. He could not control levitations, occur as they might. Yet on this dark night of 13th December, 1868, he had clearly determined to cross from one window to the next. He was totally confident and this time he was to control the "spirits" and not *vice versa*! Had he failed to sustain his normal drawing-room levitations, he had only to tumble a few feet to the carpet. But had the "power" run out when he was halfway between the balconies, his broken body would have lain 45 feet below on the paving. Had he ensured that this could not happen?

2. He was firmly insistent that none of the witnesses should leave his chair in the sitting-room while he made his exit via the window of the adjacent bedroom. He demanded this beforehand. After his triumphant re-entry at their own window, he thanked them for obeying him. Why? It would have been supreme attestation had they actually seen Home "float" through the air. But none did so. And it would have been an anti-climax to see him cautiously tread the string-course, held safely by a rope that would hold a horse.

That Home was a great medium appears indisputable. But this Ashley House levitation may be dubious. He had the necessary motive for pulling off this new marvel. His witnesses were of impeccable character. His fresh fame resounded once more over Europe. The Mrs Lyon scandal was forgotten and the revered medium was replaced on his pinnacle.

None knew the real truth but Daniel Dunglas Home himself. Now he lies in the Russian Cemetery at St Germain-en-Laye, just outside Paris. He alone knew his secret. Or should one say that he alone *knows* his secret?

Editor's note: Ashley House was demolished about 10 years ago to make way for British Petroleum's new headquarters.

The four-square world of Prof Taylor

Is this the final retreat of a once ardent champion of the paranormal? Hilary Evans finds some odd contradictions in this latest statement of belief by the professor.

What a tidy, simple world Professor John Taylor inhabits! It possesses these clearly demarcated boundaries, you see, within which everything that happens, happens. When something seems to be happening outside those boundaries, well, it isn't really happening at all. It's as simple as that.

Mind you, it has taken Professor Taylor a lot of heart searching, not to mention more practical investigation, to clarify this situation. Many of his colleagues in the world of science do not even consider the possibility that events may occur outside the boundaries of current scientific knowledge. Unlike them, Professor Taylor is genuinely puzzled by the reports of such events which are continually being received, and was honestly determined to get to the bottom of them. For this, unquestionably, he deserves our respect.

If we can bring ourselves to accept his conclusions, he deserves not only our respect but our heartfelt thanks. For now we can all relax. At the end of his new book *Science and the Supernatural* he concludes, "the supernatural has thus become completely natural. The paranormal is now totally normal. ESP is dead." (p.165)

Scientific principles

How, you will wonder, has Professor Taylor been able to succeed where so many generations of investigators have failed? Quite simply, by keeping steadfastly to what he premises as solid scientific principles. Hold fast to them, and you can't go wrong. Unless, of course, you are not wholly satisfied with Professor Taylor's idea of what constitutes scientific principles.

For instance, at the outset of his book, he tells us: "If they exist, then psychic events contradict science". (p.22) His logical model, reduced to essentials, is:

- 1 Paranormal events, if they occurred, would contradict science.
- 2 Science cannot be contradicted.
- 3 Consequently paranormal events do not occur.

Logically it is impeccable: but what about his premise? I am not sure that all of us would accept that word 'contradict'. Some might feel that 'extend' would be a more appropriate word. And the point is crucial, for it is the foundation stone of all that Professor Taylor has to say.

All his training and experience as a physicist tells him that any event must be

activated by one of the four known forces: gravity, radioactivity, electromagnetism or nuclear force. He knows, moreover, that of these forces, only the third, electromagnetism, is even a possibility as the activating force for such paranormal events as psychokinesis. He conducted a number of investigations to see whether in fact it was responsible: he found that it wasn't, nor could it possibly be by an order of millions to one.

But if none of his forces was responsible, he was left with just two options: there must be a fifth force, unknown to him, responsible; or the events didn't occur. Possessing no evidence for the existence of a fifth force, he concludes that the second alternative is the correct one.

Miracle or lies

This meant — for Professor Taylor is a conscientious investigator — that he had to find explanations for the reports of paranormal events made by so many people. He starts with clairvoyance which, by his reasoning, can only be "a miracle or lies" (p.56). Since his model of science excludes miracles, that leaves him only with lies. That disposes of clairvoyance.

Telepathy comes next. The tens of thousands of spontaneous cases which have been reported are swiftly disposed of: "Anecdotal cases are most probably the results of coincidence" (p.84). As for experimental attempts to replicate telepathy in the laboratory, "the tests which have been claimed to give support to the existence of these phenomena are very likely based on the use of shaky statistical analysis of a poorly designed experiment" (p.84).

I am not sure how scientific those phrases "most probably" and "very likely" are: still, insofar as they are an indication of Professor Taylor's reluctance to claim too much, they make a refreshing change from the dogmatism displayed by some of his colleagues.

Regrettably, he is not always so modest. Of Uri Geller he writes: "If he is not prepared to be tested under such conditions his powers cannot be authentic" (p.118). This is of course a totally erroneous and unjustified deduction. Geller is under no obligation to submit to Professor Taylor's tests, whether or not his powers are authentic: even if he did submit and failed the tests, it would not follow that his powers were necessarily not authentic, for the

possibility would remain that they are such that they could not be tested in the way Professor Taylor planned. But whether Geller's powers are in fact authentic is beside my present point, which is that Professor Taylor's use of the word 'cannot' in that sentence is totally unscientific. The most he has the right to say is "if he is not prepared to be tested, his powers cannot be *authenticated*". Which is not the same thing at all.

Again, consider his investigation of UFOs. He spoke to two persons who claimed to have witnessed UFOs, and found both claims inadequate. On the strength of this, he feels justified in concluding: "I am afraid that here again the evidence for UFOs is so slight that no serious claim can be made for them" (p.158). It may be that he reached this conclusion after making a meticulous study of the extremely complex evidence available, but if so he makes no reference to it either in the text or in his bibliography, in which only one ufological book, eight years old, is cited. Yet on the strength of this he writes "We... (I think he means 'I')... have shown in this chapter that... UFOs... are all phenomena... due to natural causes" (p.161). Whatever his views on UFOs may be, the reader must feel uncomfortable in the face of such shabby disrespect for the scientific method.

Pontificating and misleading

Covering the entire field of the paranormal, as Professor Taylor sets out to do in his 170-page book, inevitably means that he cannot go thoroughly into every field. He is not to be blamed for not having read the body of serious UFO evidence, which now comprises dozens of demanding books as well as massive archive material. But if he has not done this research, he has no more right to pontificate on it than I would have to pontificate on physics. To do so is lamentably unscientific.

Professor Taylor is so clearly in earnest to give his readers a fair picture of the situation, that one is reluctant to accuse him of being deliberately misleading. But what is one to say of his spousal (p.88) of W.G. Lambert's theory that much alleged poltergeist activity is in fact caused by subterranean water movement, and that this could account for much of the success of the celebrated nineteenth century medium D. D. Home?

He outlines the theory, but makes no

reference to the fact that when published in the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, the suggestion drew a storm of ridicule, for even the slightest examination of the facts would show that it would have been quite impossible for underground water to enable Home to perform a specific feat at a specific time in a strange house under the highly selective conditions we know to have applied.

But the very fact that Professor Taylor so uncritically seizes upon the Lambert hypothesis is a significant indication of his method of work; he is ready to espouse any hypothesis, no matter how improbable, so long as it operates within the parameters of current science and utilises known forces. His determination not to admit that anything is occurring outside those parameters requires him to make *a priori* judgments for which 'unscientific' is the kindest word. Thus "the only possible conclusion left open to us in this whole poltergeist phenomenon is that of a mixture of expectation, hallucination and trickery" (p.108). Whether this conclusion will satisfy those who are forced to abandon their homes because of alleged poltergeist activity may be doubted: it is even less likely that it will prove acceptable to those scientists, many of them of professorial status, who have looked somewhat more thoroughly than Professor Taylor into poltergeist problem.

"Expectation, hallucination and

trickery" are offered as explanations for a wide range of phenomena: for others, coincidence is once again invoked. When the dowser Bill Lewis diagnosed the somewhat unlikely fact that a TV interviewer had some metal in his thigh, Taylor's view is "I now regard this claim... as coincidence" (p.141). When the Dutch clairvoyant Croiset locates the body of a missing girl thousands of miles away in Japan, after the police had searched for weeks, Taylor comments: "We can only conclude..." (again, I suggest he means 'I') "...that results like Croiset's may merely arise as fantasies in the mind of the medium, the coincidentally correct features then being seized upon and taken as evidence for the correctness of the whole" (p.145).

It would be easy to go through this entire book watching Professor Taylor's struggles, but as argument succeeds argument the spectacle grows sadder and sadder. When this eminent scientist announced his intention of undertaking a serious, objective study of paranormal phenomena, his initiative was warmly welcomed, for all serious investigators of the unexplained must wish for just such an inquiry, conducted in a spirit of open-minded scepticism by an impartial investigator of high professional standing.

Had his conclusions been negative, they would none the less have been acceptable provided they were based on acceptable

premises and reached by an acceptable methodology. But this book makes it clear that his premises were based on *a priori* assumptions, and that his methodology, even when it was not inadequate or slipshod, was shackled continually by a requirement that the results should conform to the limitations imposed by those premises.

Nor is that all. Even in this limited space, instances have been cited to arraign Professor Taylor of unscientific procedure throughout his investigation: he has been seen to choose his evidence to suit his purpose and disregard the remainder; to make dogmatic assertions in areas where his experience is clearly inadequate; and to reach conclusions totally unjustified by the evidence he presents. In brief, he stands accused of totally unscientific conduct, in a way which must offend all true scientists as much as it saddens those of us who hoped for so much more.

Science and the Supernatural, by John Taylor, is published by Maurice Temple Smith at £7.50. I recommend all readers, and Professor Taylor himself, to read *On the Margins of Science*, Sociological Review monograph 27 from the University of Keele, published March 1979 at £4.95 (PB): it is a penetrating series of studies on various aspects of science and 'deviant science' taking no sides but exploring the disputed ground between organised and 'alternative' science with a lucidity and precision which are utterly lacking in Taylor's book.

Taylor's views on telepathy and ESP generally are best assessed in the light of several superb papers in Benjamin Wolman's *Handbook of Parapsychology*, published by Van Nostrand Reinhold: for poltergeists, see Gauld & Cornell's *Poltergeists*, Routledge, 1979, £9.95; for healing, see Brian Inglis *Natural Medicine*, Collins, 1979, £6.50; for ufology, see *UFO Phenomena and the Behavioral Scientist*, edited by Richard F Haines, Scarecrow Press, 1979; for dowsing, see Francis Hitching, *Pendulum, the Psi Connection*, Fontana, 1977, 85p.

The unwilling healer

Despite his initial resistance, Tom Johanson was persuaded to discover his talent as a healer. Roy Stemman traces the course of his often dramatic career.

Having watched Tom Joahnson conduct many healing demonstrations, and having recommended people to seek his help — with beneficial results — I regard him as one of our foremost healers. So it comes as a suprise to learn from his biography that he is an unwilling healer.*

Despite his healing gift, Tom's main activity in life is running the busy Spiritualist Association of Great Britain in Belgrave Square. As General Secretary he is responsible for its administration, which includes supervising sittings with mediums, lectures, healing clinics, bookstall and the other events which occur seven days a week in the prestigious building. Somehow, when he receives special requests, he also finds time to see sick people as well as running a regular Saturday clinic.

His biographer is Hunter Mackintosh who, as president of the SAGB, has had the opportunity of seeing Tom at work and of hearing spontaneous testimonies to his healing talents. But the book does not place its emphasis on case histories. Instead it endeavours to find out what motivates

Tom and how he copes with the many problems which suffering presents. It offers a philosophy of life which many will find helpful.

Tom's involvement in Spiritualism came about when he learned from a brother and sister-in-law that they had received a message through a ouija board from another brother who had vanished mysteriously, with his ship, during the Second World War. Tom scoffed but decided to investigate the paranormal for himself.

His search eventually led him to the Marylebone Spiritualist Association, now the SAGB, and a highly respected medium, Harold Sharp, who recognised Tom's psychic potential. For seven years Tom studied under the guidance of this medium and his earlier scepticism soon gave way to acceptance of life after death as he experienced a variety of psychic phenomena.

But none of this had prepared Tom for what was to become his greatest gift. The Association's secretary had asked Harold Sharp to organise a healing clinic. The

selection of the healers was made by the medium's spirit guide, Brother Peter, and when he pointed to Tom (using Sharp's entranced body) the young man was so surprised that he said there must be a mistake. The guide assured him there was no mistake, and subsequent events proved him right.

"He was wholly unconvinced of his healing power even when grateful patients returned to tell him that they were completely restored to health," Mackintosh writes. "He was so sure of his inability to heal anyone that he expected to be dismissed from the clinic as a failure... He actually decided to leave of his own accord but was persuaded by Sharp to change his mind. Though he stayed and continued to heal his doubts remained for many years."

Even now, when there are enough case histories to leave no doubt, and when he is in demand in Britain and overseas as a lecturer and demonstrator, Tom Johanson never ceases to wonder why he was chosen for this particular task.

I was unwittingly involved in one the



From a wheelchair... to the dance floor.

case histories quoted in the book. I had gone to a Soho strip club... for strictly paranormal reasons! The club was said to be haunted. During my discussion with the people who worked there, one of the girls asked if I knew anything about healing. One of her neighbours had a six-year-old son who had creeping paralysis and for whom doctors could do no more. He had only months to live.

I told her that in a few days' time there would be an open-air demonstration of spiritual healing in Trafalgar Square, and though there was no guarantee that the boy would be treated I thought it was worth a try. I am delighted to say that my advice was taken. Young Billy Welch was taken by his mother and he received treatment. Today, he is alive and well and leading a normal life. A photograph of Tom Johanson treating Billy in Trafalgar Square is one of the illustrations in the book.

Another case history which is equally striking concerns a woman who was severely crippled. She was carried onto a platform at one of Tom's healing demonstrations. He treated her but this was not a case where an instantaneous cure was brought about. She left the platform in the wheelchair and Tom heard no more. For all he or the audience knew the healing may have been unsuccessful.

Then, eight years later at a dinner and

dance, he noticed a woman dancing with great verve. Their eyes met and she left her partner to talk to Tom. She revealed that she was the woman who had been carried onto the platform.

"I felt no better at the time and that night I went to bed aching all over. In the morning I found that my back was black and blue where you had touched me. I stayed in bed but the following day I rose and moved about without any difficulty. I have never been in that wheelchair since, even though the doctors told me I would never leave it. Today, as you can see, I am perfectly fit."

But healing is not always successful. Because a healer has cured a particular condition in one person does not mean he will be able to do so in another. The reason, says Tom Johanson, is because the healer is just a channel for the healing process, and is powerless to affect or modify the natural laws which govern healing.

"Every human being is born on earth in order to fulfil a purpose," Tom explains. "and that purpose can only be fulfilled by living through a great number of experiences. Indeed, the earth is in a very particular sense the plane of experience. Man is a dual being — one part of him is rooted in time and matter but the other part is related to eternity and spirit. He

progresses through a succession of incarnations... And, of course, his evolution as a spiritual being is relevant to the manner in which he responds to spiritual healing."

Tom makes the point that man's spiritual being learns from what is experienced in the primordial world, which is an example of the law of opposites in operation.

"We must first experience what is illusory and negative before we can know what is real and positive. Everything generates its opposite and nothing can be known except through its opposite. Light is known because of darkness, reality because of illusion, wisdom because of folly, affirmation because of negation. Man naturally prefers pleasure to pain and finds it hard to accept that he cannot have the former without the latter."

There is a limit to how many people Tom Johanson can help with his healing powers. But his philosophy, I suspect, could well help many more gain a greater understanding of life and its purpose. The pages of this biography, and its simply-told story, may well mark a new chapter in the spiritual quest of those who read it.

**The Unwilling Healer by W.H. Mackintosh (Regency Press), £3. Available from the SAGB, 33 Belgrave Square, London, SW1 for £3.46 or \$7.00.*

Billy Welch — six months to live.



EARTH MYSTERIES

Earth Mysteries

Paul Devereux is one of the leading authorities on earth mysteries. As editor of *The Ley Hunter* and co-author of *The Ley Hunter's Companion*, he has established a reputation for pioneering work on leys and related subjects. In this column, he talks about fresh developments in this rich field of research.

Paul has been in the forefront of work to establish the validity of the ley theory (a ley is an alignment of prehistoric sites). More recently, as a founder member of the Dragon Project team, he has been delving into the deeper significance and nature of prehistoric sites. Already the Dragon Project has yielded major findings. He explains how Alpha readers can collaborate in this imaginative and enterprising project.

State of the Art

THESE are exciting times in ley hunting. One can begin to sense the possibility of some form of limited acceptance of the ley principle (not of all leys!) by at least some of the archaeological establishments. Throughout this year there has been correspondence between TLH and one of Britain's most respected archaeologists: the going has been rough at times, but the will for some sort of contact seems to exist on both sides. And the integrity of archaeologists will be put to the test in the next six months or so because of vital new research in Ireland which is yielding all sorts of Earth Mysteries goodies, including a ley well over a mile in length that will prove indisputable. Ireland is the land that has provided the decisive evidence to prove the essential validity of Alfred Watkins' Herefordshire insight. The whole story will be told in TLH 90 (Winter 1980/81).

In the meantime, ley hunters are studying two particularly clear motifs that have emerged in ley patterning in Britain. Amidst the welter of potential alignments that have been plotted it is possible to see that alignments onto local "holy hills" (hills capped by some form of prehistoric earthworking), and fairly short alignments of standing stones to the edges of stone circles are recurring patterns.

A Tale of Two Patterns

THE HOLY HILL pattern was noticed because of comparison with the Bolivian old straight tracks as recorded by Tony Morrison in his *Pathways to the Gods*. There, straight lines radiate out from village churches — which presumably stand on the sites of earlier Indian shrines — to holy hills a mile or more away. These hills usually have a shrine on top of

them to which the old straight path leads. We suddenly realised that in *The Ley Hunter's Companion* we had presented a set of such lines occurring here in Britain without being aware of them as holy hill alignments!

A few examples: The holy hill at Winchester is St Catherine's Hill; the ley comes in from the north from Tidbury Ring via an old church, Hyde Abbey and the cathedral in Winchester and on to the mizmaze atop the earthworked hill itself. The chalk-figure hills (all topped by prehistoric earthworks) at Uffington, Wilmington and Cerne Abbas all have churches or abbeys at their bases aligning onto the hill summits, taking in other sites too. The line at Cerne Abbas is particularly well-marked.

At Hereford, the tree-browed prehistoric hill of Dinidor is the local holy eminence. Again a line from the north comes to it, through the ancient church of All Saints and the cathedral. At Cambridge, Wandlebury is the prehistoric marker of the holy hill above the city in the Gogmagog Hills. From the northwest, a line runs through Cambridge's Castle Hill mound and the Round Church as well as two other churches and at least one ancient chapel site. Wandlebury too has its chalk hill figures carved on the ground.

In Cleveland, a line linking Guisborough church and priory sets up an alignment to a cairn and set of tumuli on the moor rearing up beyond the town. And so it goes — the pattern is recognisable and repeated. It is even possible that where a holy mount was required by the ancients they would build one themselves if nature hadn't already provided such a feature. Silbury could probably fit this pattern in relationship to Avebury henge.

Very recently, Donald Cyr of America's *Stonehenge Viewpoint* magazine has sent me analyses of the declinations of all the leys in *Companion*: nine of the 40 leys form a curious aggregation of declinations near 38° 13'. Cyr wasn't to know it, but every one of these leys is a holy hill line!

Then we have the shortish lines of standing stones coming in to (or out from) the perimeters of stone circles. There are only two clear cases of this, but they occur at opposite ends of the country and are so distinctive that it is suspected that more may exist thus providing a true, recurring pattern. The two sites involved at present are Boscawen-un circle in Cornwall which has a three mile alignment of five old stones, and a circle about two kilometres south of Craigeearn, a village in Aberdeenshire. This has an alignment of three stones in a

distance of three-and-a-half kilometres. Mathematician Bob Forrest computes the statistical significance of this line at worst at 0.01 probability (TLH 87). Both these lines were discovered by that Earth Mysteries Master, John Michell.

It seems to me that patterns such as these, if squeezed of all the information they can yield, could provide valuable insights into the mysterious thought-processes of the prehistoric surveyors who had this obsession with alignment.

Alpha Readers Can Help

TOWARDS THE end of this year we hope to mount a ground-level theodolite survey of stone lines like the Craigeearn and Boscawen examples. The programme is likely to take one or two years. But where are the examples of other stone lines?

TLH readers have been asked, and the invitation is here extended to Alpha readers, to seek out other possible examples. Preferably using the 2½-inch to the mile O.S. scale, or larger, study stone circles for evidence or similar tight alignments of stones relating to them. Such lines are unlikely to be longer than a few miles. Send in your discoveries to me c/o Alpha, or directly to TLH. Any durable

discoveries made in this inquiry will be credited to the person originally drawing our attention to them. So here's a chance to get your name into a little bit of Earth Mysteries history!

Likewise, search maps of all the abbeys, churches and cathedrals you can think of (and of former sites of such features) to see if you can spot alignments leading out from them to a local holy hill. A church and abbey or cathedral near the base of the hill usually set up such alignments. I'd be very interested to hear of any results.

Leprecairns

A FEW Dragon Project members paid a lightning visit to Ireland several weeks ago. Amongst a number of memorable contacts, we particularly enjoyed being shown around some of Ireland's startling passage cairns by researcher Martin Brennan and his co-workers. Martin has just published *The Boyne Valley Vision* which opens up the decoding of the Irish "tomb" carvings together with exciting new information on the use of light and measure by the neolithic wizards in Ireland. Martin has also presented us with the incontrovertable Irish ley material I have already referred to. The scene is set for new archaeological trauma.



MATTHEW MANNING

"Healing and Self-healing"

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PAUL BEARD'S *Living On* sets out to provide a practical, factual guide to the next sphere of existence. An author, a psychologist and an astronomer give their respective reactions to the scenario which, if Beard's informants are right, awaits them and us.

IN HIS earlier book, *Survival of Death* Paul Beard presented the case for survival as such. Widely acclaimed on publication, it has impressed readers of varying beliefs by its lucid and level-headed approach. Now, in its successor, he assumes survival of death as a working hypothesis, and sets out to collate the information we have as to what form survival will take.

For many, of course, the concept itself will be unacceptable, for reasons personal or cultural. And even those who accept survival as a probability may be reluctant to give credence to the accounts which, like those television programmes which present us with possible holiday options, purport to give us a preview of the life to come.

Nevertheless, it is precisely on this kind of evidence that Paul Beard believes we can usefully draw, in the form of statements obtained via sensitives of various kinds. There are reasonable grounds for believing that the originators of these statements may indeed be the people they claim to be: former fellow-inhabitants of our earth, many of them well-known, who have not only passed on to another level of existence but are prepared to send back news of it, like emigrants sending back postcards from Australia to those who remain behind.

Because the subject is at once so interesting and so controversial, *Alpha* has taken the unusual step of inviting three people, with differing viewpoints, to tell us how they responded to Beard's book. Guy Playfair, author of *This House is Haunted* and several previous books, describes himself as "a non-believer in non-survival": Eric Farge, lecturer in psychology, accepts, not too unhappily, the label of "sympathetic sceptic": Archie Roy, Professor of Astronomy at Glasgow University, writes not only as a scientist but as the author of several writings, both fiction and non-fiction, in which he has been particularly concerned with the nature of time.

"Proof is everyone's possession, conviction is one's own".

This quotation from Paul Beard's previous book expresses his own humility in presenting his survey. What I am trying to do, he

told *Alpha*, is to say "Here are all these contributions, and this is the kind of picture they seem to make up: it's up to you to decide whether they make sense".

Clearly, for the author, they do make sense. Not all are of equal value, but together they form a coherent, consistent programme. Readers of Robert Crookall's books, to which Beard pays willing tribute, will be aware both of the enormous quantity of evidence available for a future existence, and also of its overwhelming self-consistency. What Paul Beard has done has been to take, from the great mass of testimony available, that which seems to speak most clearly and most helpfully, and to construct from it a model of the next level of existence which will, quite simply, make sense.

From then on, it's up to the reader to decide on its validity. This is in keeping with the policy which Beard, during his fourteen years as president of the College of Psychic Studies in Kensington, has worked to create an open-ended policy which, in his own words, says to the inquirer "make your own investigations, form your own opinions: we are here to supply information and to help you". The college holds no corporate views, and Paul Beard is scrupulous not to present his private convictions as public proof.

None the less, the fact that so lucid and so perceptive a thinker has reached certain conclusions is bound to carry weight for the reader. The author came to the problem of survival with a personal conviction that it was a valid hypothesis: his years of investigation confirmed that intuitive conviction with experience which strengthened his original belief. As he feelingly told *Alpha*, "there's a lot of conviction behind that book".

"To me, the two worlds are one".

Living On is the second book in a projected trilogy. In the third he plans to carry his inquiry one step further: "Assuming that we survive, assuming that we know a bit about the existence to come, assuming that there are teachers of some validity, what use should we make of what we've been told?"

Some of us, no doubt, will feel that we've got more than enough to do on this level of existence without troubling about the next. Paul Beard would reply that it is helpful, in living this life, to know that it will not end at death, that there is another plane of existence awaiting us and that the more we know about that further life the more confidently we will operate in this one.

For him, the standards set and the sentiments expressed by

communicators from the next world provide yardsticks whereby we can evaluate our conduct in this one: often we can utilise them in our earthly decision-making. Paul Beard's books express, in a very real sense, his conviction that "to me the two worlds are one, essentially". This practical, level-headed, no-nonsense guidebook is the expression of that conviction.

H.E.



Paul Beard.

LIVING ON Paul Beard

George Allen & Unwin £5.95

SUBTITLED *A study of altering consciousness after death*, this book will need no recommendation here for the thousands of members of, and visitors to, the College of Psychic Studies, over which Mr Beard has presided these past dozen years with benevolent but firm authority. He is widely known and respected as a convinced believer in survival of bodily death, and this book, tightly packed with commonsense approaches to the subject, reasonable deductions and conclusions, and above all, *evidence*, is one that many will want to buy and keep on that special shelf reserved for books that fertilise the mind.

"The task", says the author, "is the regeneration of the world by the individual...", a task shared by those of us on both sides of physical death, and one that must be carried out both individually and collectively. This, he says, is the essential implication of survival.

Although he is a member of the Society for Psychical Research of long standing, Paul Beard has no time for the academic debate that so often passes nowadays for serious research. He is not arguing here for his own beliefs, but trying to "assess the composite picture of post-mortem experience as presented by the evidence which we so far possess". And his own openness of mind is most

refreshing, notably in Chapter 13, where he makes the important point that the only authority in what some call "alleged", "purported" or "ostensible" communications from beyond physical death "lies in whatever degree of internal coherence they possess", and despite discrepancies which he freely acknowledges, the coherence is impressive.

Scepticism, says the dictionary, is a questioning state of mind in which the assertions of others are doubted. Paul Beard undoubtedly has a questioning mind, and must surely doubt the assertions of many concerning survival. Yet, for him, scepticism has given way to conviction. One suspects Yuri Gagarin found it hard not to accept the reality of space travel, whatever the Astronomer Royal might have said the year before. Paul Beard writes with the assurance of a searcher who has spent a lifetime studying the evidence and putting it all together, while keeping both feet firmly on the ground. *Living On* is most satisfying.

Guy Lyon Playfair

Unpersuaded

PAUL BEARD'S new book is based mainly on the vast corpus of scripts and utterances produced by mediums, though there is also some discussion of material from other sources, including out-of-body experiences and the writings of visionaries like Rudolf Steiner. The author gives us more than a glimpse of what may be in store for us.

The content of immediate interest in mediumistic communications is, of course, the verifiable information relating to persons and events on earth that goes some way towards establishing the identity of the ostensible communicators, and hence provides evidence of their survival. Anything else produced during a sitting is extremely difficult to assess, and the temptation is to reject it lock, stock, and barrel.

Paul Beard is well aware of the difficulties and, in a chapter on the problems of assessment and acceptance, offers useful guidance in the form of a set of canons, or criteria, to apply when attempting to judge the veridicality of this other material. But I am a little worried about some of his sources and wonder whether these criteria were always uppermost in his mind when he selected the various extracts he quotes liberally throughout the book.

Often descriptions of post-mortem existence are not unlike descriptions of certain ante-mortem experiences or of the

experiences of mystics and some poets. And often the first taste of life after death is very similar to life as it was lived on earth. In a chapter entitled 'The Illusion of the Summerland' we are told why we should not be surprised at this. If the mediumistic discourse continues, however, and the subject of what may be called post-mortem psychology is broached then inconsistencies begin to appear. The accounts we have of the fate of the 'self' or of the post-mortem development of personality seem most unconvincing to me.

Another problem is the conflict of views expressed by different communicators on the question of reincarnation. The author tries to resolve this discrepancy by pointing out that the 'forward march' view, denying reincarnation, is proclaimed usually by recent arrivals in the next world whereas the cyclical view, which includes it, is propounded by those whose experience there is extensive.

The accounts of the latter cannot be fully understood, he claims, unless reincarnation is a fact. He also advances moral arguments for accepting reincarnation — and even suggests that immortality is not earned by 'the very slender work of seventy years or so of earth life'! There may be some truth in this, but has the rest of the work required of us to be done on earth? The notion of reincarnation gives rise to all manner of difficulties which the ostensible communicators and the controls seem only half aware of, and they are not really ironed out in this book.

Nonetheless, *Living On* is a challenging book and I admire its author's courage. I remain unpersuaded.

Eric Farge

LIVING ON

Paul Beard

George Allen & Unwin, £5.95

AS A scientist with a life-long interest in psychical research I have long been convinced of the need to listen carefully to serious searchers in this complex field. In parapsychology we are all treading in very deep waters and none of us is an expert. When someone as widely experienced as Paul Beard, someone as honest and careful and balanced as he is, writes a book in which he assesses what ostensible communicators from the other side of death have to tell us about conditions there, we should study what he has to say.

Like someone in Victorian England presented with a multitude of travellers' and explorers' tales about Africa, Beard faces the task of weighing

them, reconciling their seeming discrepancies, deciding which he trusts and finally, with insight, building an acceptable picture of a dark continent he has not yet visited, its different geographical regions, its multivarious inhabitants, their ways of life.

Unfortunately, unlike the Victorian who can come face to face with the tellers of tales, and can even visit Africa if he so wishes and ascertain its existence (and return!), the psychical researcher is without these advantages. He is moreover aware that an alternative view of these intimations of post-death life holds that a combination of ESP from the living, a subconscious dramatisation of information so gleaned, a dash of wishful thinking tempered by religious and ethical upbringings, plus a kaleidoscopic pattern of secondary personalities goes far towards 'explaining' these alleged post-death communications. We are in communion with ourselves, albeit with our deepest psyches.

But does the super-psi scenario with all its trimmings go far enough? I wish I knew. As a scientist I have to state that I am forced by the evidence to keep both options open. I do not believe nor do I disbelieve that we survive death. In the light of the overwhelming evidence (at least to me) of the existence of psychic powers such as telepathy, clairvoyance, psychometry and so on, I must retain that standpoint however unsatisfactory it is.

But let us assume for a moment that Beard's witnesses are genuine. Then it must be said that faced with a vast, contradictory, necessarily vague set of accounts of life beyond death, Beard has in truly masterly fashion analyzed this set and has provided a sensible, sane, reassuring picture of a psychic universe that is just, compassionate, caring and loving. This book is valuable and deserves to be widely read, even by sceptics like myself.

Archie E. Roy

ATTACKING THE SURVIVAL ENIGMA

IN 1963 a number of investigators from many different disciplines got together to form the Survival Joint Research Committee Trust. The object was to pool their ideas and findings on the baffling question of whether survival after death can be shown to be a fact. The Trust has no corporate views, nor do all its members necessarily accept survival even as a working hypothesis.

Their investigations have proceeded along various lines, some of them conventional, others more innovative. Now the Trust has just issued a brief account of

current work in progress, describing the lines which investigation is following. This is obtainable (price 60p) from the Trust's office at 2 Greycoat Place, London SW1P 1SD, from which additional information about the Trust and its work can be obtained.

SIGNS OF THE GODS?

Erich von Däniken (translated by Michael Heron)

Souvenir Press £5.95

GUARDIANS OF THE UNIVERSE?

Ronald Story

New English Library £5.95

"MY SPECULATIONS are daring, the lines of communication between my axioms are not yet stable." (p. 131)

Have we, I asked myself, been unfair to von Däniken? Just because he has been caught telling untruths, just because some of his 'evidence' has been proved worthless, has this blinded us to the deeper merits of this self-proclaimed (p. 214) 'prophet of the past'? So I sat down in total objectivity to reassess him in the light of his new book.

I have to say that I found him still as unacceptable as ever. The lines of communication between his axioms are not simply unstable, they are non-existent. He leaps from one unsupported claim to the next with the agility of his native chamois, and turns back encouraging us to follow with a glib "we should confidently accept the Egyptians' horror story as fact" (p. 42) — but the confidence is all his own, and to me it looks more like a confidence trick.

Of course von Däniken is his own worst enemy. If he weren't so insufferably big-headed (on p. 235 he implies that he is personally responsible for the current interest in extraterrestrial life) our hackles wouldn't rise so promptly. If he didn't abuse his evidence so shamelessly (see his ludicrous comparison of Zimbabwe and Sirius on p. 193) our intelligence would not be so insulted. If he didn't make such unsupported assumptions ("We know from the chronicles that the ark and the mysterious apparatus inside it emitted rays", p. 49) he would not so completely compel our disbelief.

Twelve years have now passed since von Däniken's first book was foisted on the world as a brilliant piece of original thinking, which it was not. Story's book is only his second, nor is it likely to sell one hundredth as many copies as von Däniken's. However, as David challenging the Swiss Goliath, his weapons are skilfully used.

Nobody who reads *Guardians of the Universe?*, or its predecessor *The Space Gods Revealed*, will be left with much respect for von Däniken's honesty or for the validity of his theories.

But do people read von Däniken as fact? If they do, then a few pages of Story's book would quickly disabuse them. Yet no amount of exposure seems able to halt this clown in his lucrative career; from which we must deduce that he is giving readers what they want to read. The best we can hope for, I suppose, is that fair-minded readers — and I trust all *Alpha* readers are that! — will give Story equal time.

Still, I find it all very sad. For von Däniken *does* have a gift for asking pertinent questions, he *has* a flair for spotting links and parallels, he *can* see the wood for the trees. Maybe, beneath this jumble of unsupported claims and unconvincing links there are significant truths waiting to be revealed. But if so they're going to have to wait till someone comes along with more patience and greater humility, with more respect for truth and a greater willingness to credit his readers with reasoning powers and the ability to use them.

H.E.

OUR ANCESTORS CAME FROM OUTER SPACE

Maurice Chatelain

Pan £1.25

IF THE title hasn't given it away, a few quotes will — "One has to wonder how our distant ancestors of the Stone Age could possibly have all this knowledge of astronomy and mathematics? They could not have found it all by themselves. Somebody had to help them, a god or an astronaut" ... "We are bound to find those hidden chambers (in the Great Pyramid) some day, and once we find them, we will have evidence that it was astronauts from space who elevated us to our present pedestal" ... "It was astronauts who caused the great change by insemination and selective mutation, thus creating a new hybrid human race."

Yes, it's yet another of those books, — the conclusions all seem to be the same, only the material marshalled to support them varies. To be fair, this is one of the better ones. The author is apparently a semi-retired, ex NASA scientist, and his background and experience tell in the quality of the writing. Unfortunately, he also makes liberal use of complex mathematics, and I must decline to comment on the arguments relating to some of the ancient measures and calendars.

There certainly is some original thought here, and much unfamiliar

BOOKS

and detailed comparative historical material. Chapters are devoted to *The Constant of Nineveh*, *The Mayan Calendar*, *The Rhodes Calculator*, and *The Universal Calendar*. Sad to say, Atlantis, Edgar Cayce, Ezekiel, Piri Reis, Hoerbiger, Chartres, and bas-reliefs of spacecraft also make their pre-ordained appearances; there's never much new in the Ancient Astronaut Theory.

While one must presume that the author now earns part of his living by writing, there is no cause to suspect him of a dishonest or mercenary attitude. Ancient Astronauts seem to be a matter of belief rather than reason, with an abyss between argument and conclusion that can only be bridged by faith. While the book has more to offer than many of its kind, the author seems first to have decided on the solution, then sought the equation.

Kevin McClure

THIS HOUSE IS HAUNTED

Guy Lyon Playfair
Souvenir Press £6.95

"BUT WHAT did it all mean? The sad part of it was that so few people seemed to be interested in finding out."

What characterises this book is what characterised the investigation it chronicles: a conviction that we shall learn what poltergeists are, not by starting with a preconceived theory, but by working from the experience itself. The 'Enfield Case' is probably the most meticulously investigated and technically documented poltergeist case in history, as it is also one of the longest drawn-out and varied. It contains within it a wealth of material which will be of unique value to future researchers.

I will admit that I would have liked a more formal attempt at evaluation of the case, and some assessment in the light of current theory, apart from the occasional references scattered through the book: these could have been supplied as an appendix and would, I suggest, have helped readers to assess the events at Enfield. But, of course, the reader can do this by turning to the books recommended by the author for further reading. The important thing is the story itself.

This, Guy Playfair has told in no-nonsense no-frills fashion, with only an occasional "little did we know, as we left that night" to obtrude hindsight into the continuing narrative. As a result, we obtain a vivid insight into what it is like to experience, and to investigate, a poltergeist case, such as we have seldom if ever been given before. The passionate concern of the investigators to combine the search for truth with

the provision of practical help to the afflicted family is evident on every page, and it is hard to see how they could have conducted themselves more creditably or more usefully.

Time and again experts in various fields — psychiatrists and parapsychologists, psychics and magicians — were called in or invited themselves in, with results that were occasionally helpful but more often harmful than otherwise. The tendency of visitors to treat the suffering Harpers as museum exhibits rather than as human beings in a horrifying predicament is particularly distasteful. By contrast, the investigators themselves maintained a sympathetic, but always watchful attitude, which not only won the trust of those personally involved but must earn the respect of all but the most bigoted of hard-line theorists.

"What do these people know about such things?" commented Dr Dingwall when the investigators turned to him for advice about experts. "Absolutely nothing." If they read this book, they will learn a very great deal.

H.E.

DISCOVERING DOWSING AND DIVINING

Peter Naylor
Shire Publications 85p

AN ADMIRABLE beginners book, eminently practical and with plenty of helpful diagrams. The author is an engineer who makes practical use of skills which, he insists, can be used and enjoyed by any of us. The step-by-step approach starts with 'How to begin' and the dubious will welcome the reassurance of chapter 5: "If you are not successful"... If you've been thinking of trying your hand at dowsing, this book will help you through the awkward first stages.

PSYCHIC ARCHAEOLOGY

Jeffery Goodman
Pan Books £1.95

IN 1974 at the Mexico City meeting of the American Anthropological Association two scientists presented papers on psychic archaeology as a unique method of integrating the intuitive and analytic functions of the mind in archaeological research. Dr Norman Emerson, of the University of Toronto, the foremost Canadian archaeologist and a pioneer in this new method, described his work with 11 different psychics who were given the task of identifying the age and function of Iroquois Indian artefacts.

Emerson was inspired in his work by Edgar Cayce's psychic readings. And Jeff Goodman gave

his landmark paper. *Psychic Archaeology: Methodology & Empirical Evidence*, in which he tells of his collaboration with a remarkable psychic, who predicted with 87 per cent accuracy under controlled conditions, the precise location and depth of stone age artefacts within the context of each geological strata at a site in Arizona. Conventional archaeologists who were familiar with the region declared that it was impossible for such remains of early man to be found at this site. And the psychic, who had never visited the site, was over a thousand miles away in Oregon.

Goodman went on to develop his ideas in his book *Psychic Archaeology*. In it he comments on the work of Cayce, Ossowiecieki (a Polish psychic) and Bligh Bond (an authority on English Medieval church architecture who utilized automatic writing to make discoveries) and his own work with Aron, the Oregon psychic. Goodman communicates both his excitement and disappointments on the frontiers of science. This method represents a new paradigm of studying the past.

As explorer Dr David Zink wrote (1978),

"fortunately a distinction is emerging between the hardware and the software of the past. And thanks to the methodological revolution going on in archaeology, which is beginning to recognize the utility of information from paranormal channels, a way is opening up to probe the software of extinct civilizations... The reconstruction of ancient consciousness will ultimately require the professional use and evaluation of psychic information."

Although still in its embryonic stages, psychic archaeology, integrating the abilities of imaginative archaeologists together with gifted psychics will initiate a revolution not only in archaeology, but also in our concepts of time and memory. But unless the resulting discoveries evoke some realization of the interconnectedness of all life, of the karmic lessons for our own age from the rise and fall of cultures in the past, then it is of limited value. Unless we use paranormally acquired information in a pragmatic way to illuminate our "next message", instead of merely describing, cataloging, storing and ignoring it, then it is nothing more than the misuse of a siddhi — a yogic power which should not be aimed at as an end in itself.

John J. Steele, *Visiting lecturer, School of Architecture, University College London.*

THE ART OF ASTROLOGY

Sheila Geddes
Aquarian Press £10.00

AT FIRST glance the aspiring astrologer may be daunted by the complexity of the signs, symbols and charts in this book. However, with perseverance the serious student should not find this celestial shorthand too difficult to grasp.

Certainly, Sheila Geddes, an experienced and dedicated practitioner of her art, has written a very comprehensive manual for those wishing to set up birth charts and step by step has given clear instructions for doing so. From a very general review of the characteristics pertaining to the various Zodiacal signs she takes the student through the intricacies of planetary influences, the essential astrology, the calculations and art of interpreting the birth chart itself. There is also a helpful treatise on counselling and dealing with clients generally. The exercises at the end of each chapter should be useful in monitoring progress.

Whether one believes in cosmic influence on earth life or not, research has seemed to prove a connection between the position of the planets at the moment of birth and the chosen career, such as Mars with soldiers and athletes; Saturn with scientists; Jupiter with actors, journalists and so on. Thus the natal astrologer may help people to realize their potentialities.

None of this will inspire the sceptic with confidence, but the testing time for astrology is not far off. We are, apparently, just about to enter the Age of Aquarius, and if it does fulfill its prophetic destiny and bring us a truly non-violent era, then science may have to take another look at this much maligned but fascinating subject. In the meantime, as the author says, "Keep a sense of humour. Astrology is an absorbing never-ending study. Enjoy it".

Pamela Thomas

VOICES IN MY EAR — THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A MEDIUM

Doris Stokes and Linda Dearsley
Futura £1.00

VOTED jointly, in 1979, Spiritualist of the Year, Doris Stokes is a typical, top-flight Spiritualist medium. She has for many years been able to produce, with apparent ease, factual, precise information, for the provenance of which, communication with the 'dead' seems often to be the most reasonable explanation. As a result she has been able to comfort and enlighten a great many individuals not only in person but also, more

unusually, through radio and television broadcasts. She has travelled extensively, achieved much. Her autobiography is likely to be of great interest.

Written with the obvious help of a professional writer, *Voices In My Ear* is an enjoyable book. In an easy, anecdotal style it sets out to communicate the background and nature of the medium herself, and her experience of the reality of 'survival'.

In common with many other psychics her early life was not always easy, and her adult life not always stable or predictable. Whether a clairvoyant personality attracts instability, or whether the instability makes the clairvoyant I am not sure, but there does seem to be a link. Her account of her own difficulties is often rather moving, and her records of her mediumship have the ring of complete honesty; seldom remarkable, but often evidential.

There are undoubtedly readers of *Alpha* who would take issue with this kind of clairvoyance being called evidence. So far as I know, her outstanding talent, never analysed or explained in the book, has at no time been evaluated in any genuinely scientific manner. There may be good reason for this — while some physical mediumship was amenable to laboratory work, this kind of modern, mental mediumship, conveying original material of personal significance, is not. The only judgement usually applied is that of the recipient of the information, and it is by an accumulation of success that the reputation of such a medium is established.

Perhaps we can hope that at some time in the future Mrs Stokes, possibly with some of her colleagues, might share with us her views of the implications of her mediumship — the nature of survival, and the source and development of her ability to communicate. A few considered accounts of this kind by mediums currently working would be very welcome to many of us.

Kevin McClure

OTHER WORLDS

Paul Davies

J.M. Dent & Sons, £7.50

TOO MANY people still hanker after the comfortable nineteenth century materialistic, totally-determined atoms-as-billiard-balls universe that is so irreconcilable with the findings of psychical research, the accounts of mystics throughout the ages and the universe of quantum mechanics and relativity.

In his book *Other Worlds*, Dr Davies tries to describe the

quantum theory of the universe, exploring the extraordinary consequences of scientific research, both practical and theoretical, carried out in the past eighty years. It is no exaggeration to say that the behaviour of subatomic matter and the deductions we are forced to draw concerning mass, time, space and other seemingly simple one-syllable words make *Alice in Wonderland* appear to be a sober, commonsense tale. I suspect, however, that Dr Davies, though he makes a brave attempt and has produced a fascinating book well worth reading by anyone wanting to understand the modern physicist's view of the universe, has fallen short in his task for two reasons.

Just as we would not expect a sheep to sidle up to the fence and put us right on one or two points in the design of a motor car, because its brain simply has not the mental horse-power, so it may well be that the human brain has not the mental horse-power necessary to understand the world of the atom and the galaxies.

In addition, the author is writing in English and to be quite blunt about it the only language we have seemingly powerful enough to handle such concepts is mathematics. Our English vocabulary was designed for the macroscopic everyday commonsense world and simply lacks the proper terms. The use of phrases like "curved space and time", "space and time smashing themselves out of existence" does not really help.

Nevertheless, some impression of a universe comes across that is decidedly less irreconcilable with that sketched by psychical research. Indeed the latter picture almost seems more conservative than the one painted by the quantum physicists!

Archie E. Roy

THE HARMONIOUS CIRCLE

James Webb

Thames & Hudson £10

GURDJIEFF AND MANSFIELD

James Moore

Routledge & Kegan Paul £8.95

NOT ONE but two books on Gurdjieff and his circle — and both of them excellent. Nor can I make your life easier by recommending one rather than the other; for while both cover largely the same territory, each offers its own insights and perspectives: read both, as I have just done, and you will enjoy not a flat picture but a hologram of this amazing milieu and its presiding master.

James Webb, who has previously been our perceptive guide through the murky labyrinth of the 19th century occult scene

(*The flight from Reality*) now invites us along the winding path that leads to the Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man, presided over by that 'fraud, liar, cheat and scoundrel' who was also one of the acknowledged magi of our century, Gurdjieff, whoever he was.

If after 573 pages his identity remains unknown, and more importantly, if we are still unable to label him confidently as either charlatan or saint, our dilemma is shared by the author. He candidly draws our attention to the Master indulging in a piece of crude stage trickery: but just as we prepare to walk out in disgust, he asks can we be sure we weren't *meant* to see through the trick, mightn't that be part of the Master's deeper purpose? And yes, who *can* guess the rules of the Great Game Gurdjieff played with his followers, a game in which he was both referee and coach, the first-aid man who hurried onto the field when accidents occurred and the player who committed the foul in the first place?

This monumental book carries lightly the vast weight of research which clearly went into its making. For this we have to thank the author's lucid, jargon-free narrative approach, always reassuringly feet-on-the-ground yet always one-step ahead of us with questions to be asked, doubt raised. But what holds his wide-ranging chronicle together is the paradox at the heart of the story, Gurdjieff himself, beside whom the other protagonists are pasteboard stereotypes.

Gurdjieff is very much the hero of James Moore's book, too; but here he has to share the stage with a female lead, Mansfield, who is accompanied by her own strange supporting cast. By contrast with Webb's methodical exploration, Moore's is a wild hunt, covering more ground in half as many pages. But this does not imply that he is superficial: like Webb, he has evidently carried out a formidable amount of research, and his pages are rich as plumcake with fascinating detail.

Moore is more prepared than Webb to commit himself, for or against his characters. Middleton Murry and D H Lawrence are given every chance to damn themselves, and do so ineffectually: Orage and Ouspensky emerge with hard-earned laurels; Mansfield is seen as neither victim nor monster, but much of both. Here too, though, it is Gurdjieff who dominates the scene, a bullying actor-manager who was never too proud to lend a hand with the humblest task.

Read either of these fine books, and you will find yourself in an

amazing world which makes Bloomsbury seem petty and insipid. Read both, and you will undergo an experience which will reverberate in your mind for a long time to come. I hope Mr Webb and Mr Moore read and enjoy each other's books as much as I did.

H.E.

THE VAMPIRE IN EUROPE

Montague Summers

Aquarian Press £4.95

SURPRISINGLY, in an increasingly technological age, the vampire remains as potent a cultural myth as the UFO. Witness notably the fiction of Stephen King, numerous remakes of *Dracula*, Herzog's *Nosferatu* and the films of George Romero. Whether as archetypal Outsider, as a metaphor for predatory male sexuality or simply as the incarnation of good old evil, the vampire lives on in the popular imagination. Hence perhaps the present reissue of Montague Summers' research into the origins and development of the legend, first published in 1929.

Equipped with a fundamental belief — that the vampire is a manifestation of satanic evil — and a passion for arcane sources (not the only similarity he shares with M.R. James), Summers produced an encyclopaedic history of the creature, supported by an impressive apparatus of notes and references. That the book is riddled with inconsistencies seems a minor quibble in the face of such earnest, scholarly endeavour; indeed, the importance of the work undoubtedly lies in the fascinating source material itself, rather than in the selective way that Summers drew upon it.

For example, the "sceptical tone" of one traveller who reported a particularly gruesome exhumation and presumed to suggest that there might be rational explanations for the poltergeist-like phenomena associated with this supposed vampire, is denounced as "deplorable". Elsewhere, Summers is equally dismissive of questions which threaten his premise: why, for instance, there are so few substantiated accounts of vampirism in modern England — they can't all have been "hushed up". The vague story of Croglin Hall and extensive quotation from *Varney the Vampire* hardly constitute weighty evidence.

The book is emphatically not a *Dracula* primer (neither he, nor his authentic avatar Vlad the Impaler rate a mention) and precious little blood-sucking goes on; but its serious purpose is ultimately subverted by an unscientific method.

Chris Coupland

LETTERS

Future Tense

In his review of my book, *'Future Tense'* Hugh Marlow asks for a little more information about the methodology that was used in the experiment.

For those unfamiliar with the background it should be explained that the book is a prophetic forecast that emerged from interviews with 15 sensitive respondents — astrologers, numerologists, mediums, and so on — who were asked to comment on the role of Britain in a world context over the 1980s. From these interviews, a consensus statement was drafted and then sent back to the participants for comment in the light of what they felt intuitively, rather than by how they reacted mentally or emotionally to its content.

It is this latter aspect that your reviewer is questioning, his specific problem being the fear that the participants would be unlikely to be able to exclude their mental and emotional processes from the exercise, and would therefore be affected by reading other predictions and the general news of the day. It is difficult to refute this criticism entirely, since the validation process was not monitored by me but carried out privately by each individual panelist. However, certainly each used his or her prophetic technique in the process — meditation, trance, comparison with astrological data, contact with the control or whatever.

My hope was that the respondents, having been hand-picked for their sensitivity and their experience in the intuitive arts, would be able to divorce intuition from extraneous factors. On the other hand it must be admitted that there is a possibility that this in fact did not happen at all, and that indeed the technique is perhaps only a crude beginning of what could be developed into something more sophisticated in the future.

The review then argues that if a control group of another fifteen persons had also been used, taken at random from people in various walks of life, the result might not have been very different. However, experience over the last eight years in conducting hundreds of interviews leads me to the inescapable conclusion that it is only in areas of their own expertise that people can make rational forecasts of any value, and that unless they are actually intuitive they are unwilling or unable to generalise at all about the future.

To separate the rational from the intuitive is exceedingly difficult to do, but I feel confident that sometimes I can tell as an

interviewer when a respondent is speaking from his intuition. There is a sort of spark between us which the respondent seems unaware of, but which produces in me the feeling similar to somebody breaking an egg on my head — a sharp little shock followed by a slow seeping down. When this happens I put an asterisk against the statement in my notes of the interview, and take special account of it when writing my report.

Finally Hugh Marlow suggests that a panel of evaluators should be drawn up to devise agreed criteria against which each *'Future Tense'* prediction can be tested against reality, possibly along the lines of Dunne's *An Experiment with Time*. I would welcome this very keenly, having no protective instinct towards the forecast as such, which I have set out simply as an experiment whose outcome is totally unknown at the moment and which can only be of any value if lessons are learned from it by such stringent evaluative techniques.

Francis Kinsman.

Proper discretion

DR E. J. DINGWALL — arguably the world's most knowledgeable parapsychologist — was indeed "not born yesterday." (*Alpha*, No 8). Why, then, does he fall for bogus challenges such as Randi's? Readers of this Journal may not remember Maskelyne's louche attempts to discredit Rudi Schneider's mediumship by assuming the guise of Lady Bountiful.

Randi talks sense: no one will rush to deplete his bank account without good reason. Possibly his own intentions (like Maskelyne's) lie in a different direction: the showman's craving for free publicity at no risk to his pocket. However altruistic his pose, the magician knows that he can always back out by claiming dissatisfaction with conditions. If the latter are uncomfortably close to conviction (as in the case of Rudi), he may even refuse to look at the phenomena point-blank!

Dr Dingwall, as we all know by now, does not "believe the stories that the parapsychologists tell us"; moreover, he rightly deplores lax standards in the field. His own are certainly of the highest in what the late Dr Medhurst used to refer to as the "undiluted Dingwall": "undiluted", i.e., by the contributions of less competent collaborators. But are there not other faults to be guarded against, such as excessive discretion?

An example of the latter would be Dingwall's own third paragraph. Has any reader of

Alpha an inkling of what this is all about? Again, some may object to sweeping generalizations such as contained in allusions to the "kind of people (my ital.) whose 'experiments' Randi must accept." (Not all psychical researchers actually conduct experiments).

In a subjoined letter already referred to, Randi himself hints darkly at the existence of unreliable newspaper accounts. Really!

Perhaps the Editors will in future insist on proper references by correspondents for the guidance of their more naive readers. Let me make a start in this direction by giving mine for the controversy concerning Rudi Schneider:

PRICE, Harry, *Rudi Schneider*, Methuen. London 1930 (*vide* Index, entry "Maskelyne").

Manfred Cassirer

Mother Shipton

I SHOULD like to correct and clarify J. Drever's remarks on the Mother Shipton prophecies. (*Letters*, Issue No. 8, May/June)

The author of the spurious prophecies was actually Charles Hindley, author of several important books on Street Literature. In 1862, he reprinted the popular chapbook *Life and Death of Mother Shipton* by Richard Head (originally published 1684) with additional prophecies forged by himself. The Hindley fabrications included the famous lines: "The world to an end shall come, in eighteen hundred and eighty-one". This caused a great deal of panic in country districts during that year, people leaving their houses and spending the night in the open fields or praying in churches and chapels.

In 1873, Hindley had already confessed to the hoax (see *Notes & Queries*, 4th series, vol. XI, page 355), but by then his lines had passed into folk tradition, and ordinary country people did not read learned antiquarian journals. To add to the confusion, Hindley's son Charles Hindley junior could not resist reprinting the spurious chapbook prophecies four years later in 1877. They sold well, and were pirated by other publishers of street literature.

The spurious Hindley prophecies included an apparent prevision of motorcars, steamships, submarines, the telegraph, radio, aircraft and other modern developments. These prophecies are now firmly entrenched as folklore and frequently quoted as genuine.

I have given biographical information on Charles Hindley, father and son, in my new

introduction to the reprint of *Curiosities of Street Literature* by Charles Hindley, The Broadsheet King, London, 1966.

Leslie Shepard, Dublin

Personal encounter

I THINK that I may claim to be the first to hear of Mr Bligh Bond's discovery of the site of the Lorotto Chapel in the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey.

It must be about 60 years ago that I was sitting alone in the sacred precincts of the ruins when a strange gentleman approached me saying "Excuse me, are you interested in archæology? For I must tell somebody of a very wonderful thing that has just happened. I have discovered the site of the Lorotto Chapel!" He went on to explain that a friend of his had received through automatic writing the measurements delivered by a monk of the right period. He told me that his name was Bligh Bond and that he intended to write a book in the future and call the book "The Gate of Remembrance".

About ten years after this encounter, the story having made a deep impression on me, I asked a librarian of our local mobile library, to try to trace the book. She succeeded, and kindly procured it for me to read.

Some years ago I told the story to a close friend and she brought me your current magazine where the story was revived under the title, *Unearthing Glastonbury's Secrets*, and saluting a brilliant archæologist who did so much for Glastonbury Abbey.

Miss Dorothy M. Hoyles, Kent.

Outrageous distortion

I WAS distressed to read your article "Predudice and the Paranormal" in issue number 8 of *Alpha*. As a resigned member of the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal, I share your concern about the debunking and frequently dogmatic tone of that Committee's publication and pronouncements. However, your attack on the American Humanist Association and Professor Kurtz implying communist sympathies and possible motivations behind the committee's efforts is outrageous distortion.

The committee today is quite separate from the American Humanist Association. In fact, Professor Kurtz is no longer the editor of *The Humanist*. But most important, the suggestion that the AHA is sympathetic to communism is absurd and the kind of McCarthy-like attack that

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should have no place in any forum for serious discussion of claims of the paranormal.

The anti-communist credentials of many of the Committee's Fellows (e.g., those of Professor Sidney Hook) are indisputable, and the issue of politics is essentially irrelevant to the question of evidence for or against the paranormal. I hope that further such ad hominem argument can be avoided in the pages of *Alpha* as well as in *The Skeptical Inquirer* and other forums purporting to be interested in scientific discussions of evidence for or against claims of the paranormal.

My own differences with Professor Kurtz and his Committee have been spelled out in the September and October 1979 issues of *Fate* magazine.

Marcello Truzzi, editor, *Zetetic Scholar*, Eastern Michigan University, USA.

Small falsehoods and errors

I AM encouraged at some aspects of *Alpha*, and dismayed at others. It would seem that it is increasingly supportive of paranormal claims, often of rather peripheral nature, and gives by far the better part of its pages to these articles. But — and it is a very important feature — the critics and skeptics are given ample opportunity to reply. That is a healthy symptom that I trust will continue.

In my position, I find it damaging to allow small falsehoods and errors to persist concerning my opinions and work. Thus I must comment briefly on the May/June issue.

The "Prejudice & the Paranormal" piece was inexcusable. To start this communist-influence innuendo is not worthy of *Alpha* at all. But I will leave that judgement to the intelligent readers. Your attack on my personal involvement with CSICOP is something else. You ask, "Is his view...really more valuable than the scientists (sic) who have reached different conclusions on the totally rational". By this, does *Alpha* infer that the paranormal and belief of its claims, dictates an irrational universe? And I must say that your assertion that I have allowed myself to "be deceived into playing the all-knowing guru" is a presumption that I have never entered into. Please, again, do not put words in my mouth.

I have not tested "about 320" claimants — only 55. Over 600 — as a result of the *OMNI* piece —

have now applied, and 3 will be tested. Interestingly enough, not one person has applied as a result of any mention in *Alpha*...

My beliefs are not based on the tests I have run. These tests have only supported my contention that the scientific work being done is not being properly done. My beliefs are based upon what I have discovered in 35 years of looking into these matters, and experience in being able to see deception where I find it.

And please inform Miss E.M. Wood that she is wrong in thinking that I have "witnessed demonstrations of the paranormal" as she claims in her letter. Also, I assure Miss Marjorie Butterworth that I am not "terrified" of the truth at all. I have confronted it, and I remain serene. One lives, well or badly, and one dies. Simple, and acceptable to me. Nothing terrifying there at all! True, as Miss Butterworth says, I may be a "meddlesome pest" and cannot deny it. But I only fly in the face of the irrationalists. To them, admittedly, I am a pest...

James Randi, New Jersey, USA

Honest research

I WAS astonished to read Dingwall's excuse for having a "somewhat poor opinion of their (parapsychologists) competence in matters which require just a modicum of knowledge and care." In support of Randi he cites a number of spelling errors, indexed entries not in an alphabetical order, and the mis-titling of a past SPR President, as reasons for dismissing the evidence of experiments. "These are the kind of people whose 'experiments' Randi must accept without rigorous scrutiny," he continues.

Dingwall may be interested in an example of his colleague Randi's factual errors. There is a Randi "classic" from the Fall/Winter issue of *The Zetetic*, now the *Skeptical Inquirer*. It is even more hypocritical after one reads the claptrap that Randi wrote in reply to Stan Gooch in which Gooch is accused of putting words into Randi's mouth.

Randi refers in *The Zetetic* article to an automatic drawing of a monkey that I had produced whilst "in a trance" — his inverted commas. I have never claimed to have been in trance when producing such drawings and yet Randi quotes me as if I have said so. Quite the contrary is true as anyone reading my first two books will be aware. Putting words into other people's mouths? Randi is

certainly most accomplished at that trick.

He also has a disturbing disregard for the simplest hard facts which any intelligent child could verify. I am assailed in the same article for claims I had made "in the pages of the London *Daily Mirror*... of a sad little monkey." No article about that particular drawing has ever been published by the *Daily Mirror*, nor for that matter, by the *Sunday Mirror*. I suspect this is a typical ploy by the Amazing One in order to prevent honest researchers from going back to the original article, if it existed, and finding that Randi's waffle is nothing more than his usual rantings.

The "capper", if I may use a Randi expression, was contained at the beginning of the article. The reader was then convinced from the start that Randi had done his research and knew what he was talking about:

"Michael Manning, the newest darling of the psychic set..."

His research was so thorough that he couldn't even find the correct name of the person he was denigrating! I think it is time for Randi to return to his barrel over the Niagara Falls rather than spreading misinformation about others.

Matthew Manning, Cambridge

Wickedly Misleading

I AM grateful for the opportunity to reply to Dr. Carl Sargent's review of my book *ESP and Parapsychology: A Critical Re-evaluation*, particularly since my letter to the Editor of the *New Scientist* replying to a review by Brian Inglis, has not been published and has elicited no more from the journal than an acknowledgment slip.

Almost everything Carl Sargent writes in his review, that can be checked with the printed records, can be shown to be misleading and inaccurate. This is particularly evident in the latter part of the review where Sargent is presumably demonstrating that my "grasp of the experimental literature is poor". He deals there with what he calls the 'nadir' of my book — my "discussion of the experiments with Stepanek and the reporting of Schmidt's work on electronic PK".

In the case of the experiments on Stepanek, Sargent comments that my 1966 discussion was "massacred by Pratt... who demonstrated 9 gross errors in just 22 lines". In the account I saw, Pratt did not list these errors; but three of them were presumably

that I used the word 'black' instead of 'green' three times when describing the colour of the cards used in early tests. Since my new text includes that account in essentially its original form Sargent should have no difficulty "massacring" it. His criticisms will therefore be examined in some detail.

Sargent writes:

"... he (Hansel) states that in the experiments he discusses Pratt was always present. He stresses the need for other experimenters to have been used instead — and he should know perfectly well that many other experimenters tested Stepanek with success (including Beloff, who obtained results significantly below chance with Stepanek — Hansel claims that this is a 'failure'). This is wickedly misleading."

Distinction

In my discussion, I distinguished between (1) experiments before 1966 — as reported in my earlier book — in which Stepanek attempted to identify which way up cards (one side white and the other green) had been placed inside envelopes, and (2) experiments carried out after 1966, when following Stepanek's loss of the ability to perform successfully in the above manner, it was now claimed that he could identify particular envelopes, irrespective of which way up they happened to be, when they were concealed within further envelopes or 'covers'.

Concerning Beloff's experiment I wrote: "when tested by Dr. John Beloff Stepanek's extrasensory powers deserted him". This agrees with Beloff's own statement in the *New Scientist* (Vol. 40, 1968, p. 76) where he wrote "scoring in that experiment was at strictly chance level."

"My statement that Pratt was present at each experiment was in a section of my book dealing with experiments carried out after 1966. Here I was discussing a paper published in *Nature* by Pratt and six other investigators, presenting the results of 18 experiments carried out between May 1967 and March 1968. (*Nature*, Vol. 220, Oct. 1968, pp. 89-91). In that article a table gives details of each of the eighteen experiments together with the initials of the investigators taking part. Pratt is listed as the sole investigator in the first 4 experiments and as taking part in each of the remaining 14 experiments.

Sargent states that I appear to be "genuinely unaware of a key feature of some of Schmidt's work", and he continues "In some

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experiments Schmidt asked subjects either to aim low or high in PK tests recorded in his absence”.

This is completely wrong. In the PK tests on humans, according to the report in the *Journal of Parapsychology* (Vol. 34, 1970), the subjects always aimed at “willing” a light to move in a clockwise or counterclockwise direction among a circle of nine lights. We read there:

“... at the beginning of each run, the subject, having decided in which direction (clockwise or counterclockwise) he wanted to influence the light to go, set a switch on the panel accordingly... From the experimenters point of view, the subject’s goal was always to produce a high number of +1 counts. From the subject’s viewpoint the equivalent goal was to influence the light in the direction desired and indicated by the position of the switch of the display panel.” (p.179).

Sargent continues: “Hansel seems to believe — and the casual reader will surely believe that subjects simply told Schmidt later which trials were run under which condition. In fact, separate recording systems were used for the two aim techniques so that subjects could not cheat here.”

But in the *Journal of Parapsychology* it is merely stated that the “sequence of generated numbers” was recorded “on the paper punch tape”.

Assuming that Sargent confused the PK experiments with other experiments carried out by Schmidt his statement is still incorrect and misleading. In the case of precognition experiments where subjects could aim for a high or a low score, I wrote: (p. 223):

“Whether to try for a high or a low score was decided at the beginning of each session, and the two modes of guessing were recorded on the tape in different codes (details of which are not given) so that the computer could separate the two types of test.”

Schmidt himself wrote: (Boeing Res. Lab. Report, p.28):

“The two modes of operation were recorded on tape in different codes such that the evaluating computer could separate the two types of test.”

Cheating

Further, contrary to Sargent’s assumptions, I have at no time suggested that Schmidt’s subjects cheated and consider it extremely unlikely that they could have done so. A further discussion of why this is so, and why Schmidt was a “careless experimenter” is being

presented elsewhere.

Perhaps Sargent’s biggest howler appears in his penultimate paragraph where he writes:

“... when discussing the Heymans’ and others’ experiment with the subject Van Dam, Hansel goes one better than this. He actually states that the subject scored better when the experimenters (who knew the targets and who could have given Van Dam sensory cues) were in the room with him rather than outside it when exactly the reverse is the case! Typical.”

What I actually stated was (p. 36 para. 3):

“Some of the trials were made with the experimenters in the same room as the subject, but although he succeeded under these conditions, his scores were not as high as when they were in the room above him.”

In addition to these factual errors Sargent has inexcusably misrepresented what I said in my earlier book. He writes:

“After the publication of his *ESP: a scientific evaluation* in 1966 Hansel got a tremendous amount of stick for his assertion that one should assume that psi is impossible when examining the evidence. In this book he claims that such an assumption should be made provisionally and would have to be given up if for example Geller was repeatedly successful in ESP experiments run by sceptics.”

What I wrote in 1966 was:

“Thus in analysing an experiment that purports to prove ESP, it is wise to adopt initially the assumption that ESP is impossible. If analysis shows that this assumption is untenable, then the possibility of ESP has to be accepted”. (p. 21).

Exactly the same statement appears in the present book (p.22), but also later in the book I went to considerable pains to remove any doubts about what I had said (pp. 301, 302); and reasons for omitting experiments unless they afford a demonstration “which will rarely fail to give a statistically significant result” (pp. 211-212, 298-299).

As for what I wrote about mediums, I am no historian, but even the experts in this field disagree on what constitutes evidence and in their interpretation of events. My brief account of early investigations of mediums was intended to provide an idea of what psychical researchers got up to in those early days.

In the case of Edmund Gurney’s suicide, I might have written that he died after administering to himself a fatal dose of chloroform and that evidence given at the inquest has since been disputed.

(see Trevor H. Hall, *The Strange Case of Edmund Gurney*, given among my suggestions for further reading).

I would like to say, however, that among the early pioneers of Psychical Research, I have the greatest respect and admiration for Edmund Gurney. He always tried to get his facts straight.

Prof Hansel

Fools?

James Randi and Eric Dingwall have now said that McGill University, the University of Chile and the Human Dimensions Institute in New York are either incompetent or fraudulent. I urgently hope that the departments concerned will now demand a public apology from the two gentlemen named, with the promise of full legal action if this is not forthcoming. It is indeed very sad to have to take such action, but this is the only attitude which people like Randi and Dingwall will respect. Let no one involved in parapsychology imagine he or she is outside this dispute. *You* and I are necessarily either fools or charlatans. There is no third possibility — there can be no paranormal outcome to *any* experiment.

Certainly there has been fraud in paranormal experiments. There always will be wherever reputation and money are to be earned. I don’t suppose for a moment, of course, that Randi’s interest in the paranormal has anything to do with money or reputation.

Equally certainly, however, we must not waste too much of our time on the objectors. Our main task is to get on with the job in hand. One of the ways of so doing is to by-pass the critic through the direct study of the brain. Maxwell Cade has been doing just this with his *Mind Mirror*. I wonder how Randi explains that particular piece of ‘fraud’? I have also turned to brain function in my forthcoming book *The Double Helix of the Mind*.

Stan Gooch, London

ESP v PK

ALTHOUGH Stan Gooch’s criticisms of Zener cards testing for ESP (*Alpha* No. 7) are justified, he seems unaware that his alternative method introduces other problems. Recent experiments have shown that people being tested for psychokinesis (PK) are able to influence the fall of dice and similar objects, and the ball on Gooch’s roulette wheel would seem to be an object highly suited to being influenced by PK, consciously or unconsciously. So the question arises, what exactly

would the researchers be testing when using a roulette wheel?

Janet and Colin Bord, Montgomery, Powys

Bouquets — and brick bats

CONGRATULATIONS to Archie Jarman. His review of John Fuller’s *The Airmen Who Would Not Die* is masterly and I hope others emulate his example. I have one thing only to add to that review (*Alpha* No. 6). I can confirm that the statements about the SL airships (Schutte Lanz) are absurd.

Millions of ordinary people in Britain knew of the SL airships. They even knew the name Schutte Lanz — even if they couldn’t pronounce it. For during World War I every pub, railway station and spare hoarding carried a poster showing the different types of British and German aircraft. The Schutte-Lanz airship was one of the three German craft shown. This dramatic poster, headed “Public Warning” can, in fact, still be bought at the Imperial War Museum.

Black marks, though, to Graham Lawrence. In *Alpha* No. 7 he gets the facts about Semmelweis wrong, then he goes on to use bogus data to support invalid conclusions. He writes:

“Einstein’s theory requires that the speed of light is absolute, that no matter at what speed or in what direction you are travelling, the speed of light is always exactly the same relative to you. It is not surprising that hardly anyone knows that the Michelson-Morley experiment of 1887, or D.C. Miller’s duplication of the experiment of 30 years later with more accurate instruments, apparently demonstrated that this simply is not true. According to the experimental evidence, light travelling in the direction of the Earth’s orbit travelled more slowly relative to the observer than light travelling back the other way. The difference was small, about five miles per second, but real... For the moment, these experiments are ignored. They have to be. We cannot fit them in. One day they will be fitted in...”

Now this is baloney! The Michelson-Morley and Dayton Miller experiments produced *diametrically opposed results!* And the Michelson Morley results fit in completely with Einstein’s views. There’s no secret about this and it is widely known even among non-physicists.

The Dayton Miller results, though, are ignored simply because thousands of repetitions of the experiment failed to produce his findings. Its as simple as that. *Melvin Harris, Essex.*

What will happen to us in the next ten years?

Future Tense

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